Sports Illustrated
AUGUST 27, 1979 $1.25

BASEBALL'S GOLDEN OLDIES



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In engineering tests, Citation goes from 0 to 50 in 9 seconds flat. That's with available 2.8 Liter V6 engine and automatic transmission. California figures not available. (Citation is equipped with GM-built engines produced by various divisions. See your dealer for details.)

GM

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That's with Citation's standard 2.5 Liter 4-cylinder engine and manual transmission. (Manual transmission currently not available in California. Calif. estimates lower.)

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Next Week

PRO FOOTBALL '79 kicks off with Frank Deford's look at the NFL in the year 2000—would you believe women quarterbacks and the 150-yard field? Earl Campbell will have retired by then, but for now, as Bruce Newman reports, he's the Main Man among the Campbells of Tyler, Texas and the Oilers of Houston. Ron Reid tells you everything you wanted to know about the game [illegible] but were afraid to ask, and scouting reports assess all 28 teams Plus our regular news and features.

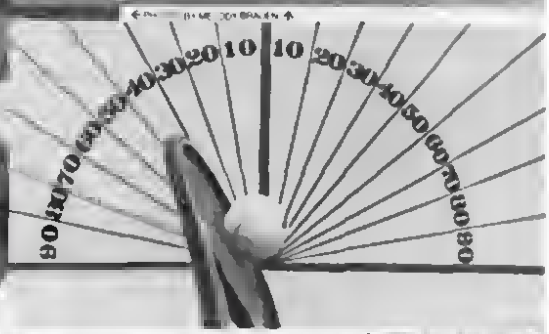
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED (ISSN 0038-822X) is published weekly except semi-weekly during the second full week in February also two issues combined at year end by Time Inc 541 N Fairbanks Ct Chicago Il 60611 principal office Rockefeller Ctr N Y NY 10020 J R Shepley President J Winston Fowlkes, Treasurer C B Beal Secretary Second-class postage paid at Chicago Il and additional mailing offices Author 2nd as second-class mail by Post Office Dept Ottawa Canada and for payment of postage in cash U S subscription $30 00 a year

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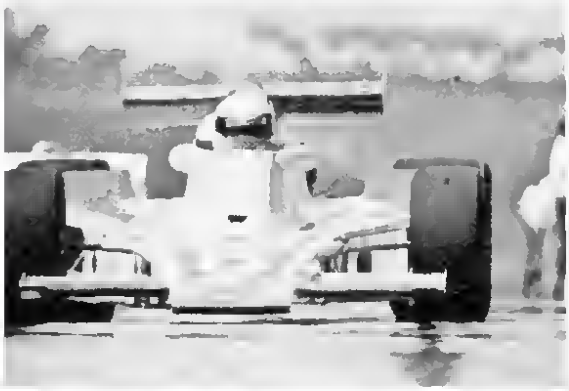
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SCORECARD

Edited by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM

DETERRENT

After Los Angeles Laker Forward Kermit Washington slugged—and seriously injured—the Houston Rockets' Rudy Tomjanovich during a game in Los Angeles on Dec. 9, 1977, NBA Commissioner Larry O'Brien fined Washington $10,000 and suspended him without pay for 60 days. That punishment, which cost Washington some $60,000, may have been a deterrent to further violence in the NBA. The league did not have any serious trouble for the rest of the '77-'78 season, nor all of last season.

Last week a federal jury in Houston reached a verdict, in a suit brought by Tomjanovich, that could help deter violence in *all* professional sport. Tomjanovich asked damages of $2.65 million against the Lakers, but the six-member jury exceeded this figure, awarding the Rocket forward $3.3 million. L.A. is also being sued by the Rockets, who are asking $1.8 million for loss of Tomjanovich's services for the remaining 53 games of the '77-'78 season. That trial is scheduled to begin in Houston next week.

Significantly, Washington, now with the San Diego Clippers, was not a defendant in Tomjanovich's suit. During the two-week trial, Tomjanovich's lawyers sought to show that the Lakers bore full responsibility for the injuries he suffered. Witnesses included Jerry West, the Laker coach at the time, who admitted that he had said nothing to Washington before or after the fight about controlling his temper. Testimony also was elicited to show that the Lakers did not fine players for fighting. The jury concluded that the Lakers were negligent in retaining a player they were aware had "a tendency for violence while playing basketball" and that the club "failed adequately to train and supervise its employee."

The Lakers have not said whether they plan to appeal, but if the Tomjanovich verdict stands, that $3.3 million figure cannot fail to impress professional teams—and their insurance companies. The big award against the Lakers would be a signal that fighting is not part of sports and that teams have a duty to try to prevent it.

BIG NAME, BAD NEWS

While the President of the United States was struggling with his most recent burdens, a namesake was battling to make the San Diego Chargers. The rookie guard from Tennessee State, who, of course, is nicknamed "The Prez," showed no shortage of energy, but, alas, the agate-type news out of San Diego last week was that Jimmy Carter had been placed on waivers.

PASSING THE BUCS

By rights, owner Joe Robbie should have been delighted when his Miami Dolphins beat the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 13–7 two weeks ago before a crowd of 72,126 in Tampa. For one thing, it was the fourth straight time the Dolphins had defeated the Buccaneers in the preseason. What is more, the four exhibition games, all of which were played in Tampa, have produced $1,029,109 for Miami's coffers. But last week it was revealed that Robbie had decided not to play the game next year.

One reason is his annoyance with Tampa owner Hugh Culverhouse, who has been a prime mover in the NFL's efforts to bar its owners and their families from holding controlling interest in other pro sports teams. Robbie's wife, Elizabeth, owns the Fort Lauderdale Strikers in the NASL, and the Dolphin owner considers that none of Culverhouse's—or the league's—business. Robbie also feels that the Buccaneers approached the series with too much "intensity," resulting in injuries to the Dolphins. "I'm not interested in a cross-state grudge match for the championship of Florida during the preseason," Robbie says.

Disagreeing with the boss, Miami Coach Don Shula credits the exhibition games at Tampa for acclimating the Dolphins to the sort of hostile crowd noise they might face during the regular season in, say, Baltimore. No matter. Robbie has replaced the Buccaneers on next year's exhibition schedule with a game against the Seahawks in Seattle, which is quite a distance from Tampa in both mileage and intensity.

IN YOUR FACE

For 7-year-old Ashley Whippet, last year's defeat in the world K-9 Frisbee Catch & Fetch championships contained an ample ration of humiliation. As the Rin Tin Tin of the art of catching a thrown Frisbee, Ashley Whippet had appeared on the *Tonight Show*, had taught Amy Carter's dog Grits a few tricks on the White House lawn and had reigned as world champion since 1974. But then, competing before 50,000 people at the world Frisbee championships in the Rose Bowl, Ashley Whippet was upset by a 2-year-old mixed breed named Dink.



The object of the competition is for a dog to catch and return a thrown Frisbee as many times as possible in two minutes. The Frisbee must be tossed at least 15 yards and the dog scores a point if any of its paws are off the ground, an extra point if all four are. Much depends on the accuracy of the toss, and Ashley Whippet's owner, Alex Stein of Sierra Madre, Calif., takes the blame for last year's defeat. "I wasn't throwing so well that day," he says.

But Ashley Whippet may have his paws full with Dink when the 1979 world championships get under way this week in Pasadena. Dink was found as a pup in a dog shelter by owners Jim and Cathy

continued

Strickler of Severna Park, Md., and he quickly became adept at Frisbee, thanks to a no-nonsense training technique. As Cathy Strickler describes it, "We threw the Frisbee at his face. He had to catch it or be knocked out."

SPREADING IT AROUND

The NCAA basketball tournament was expanded last week for the fourth time since 1974—to 48 teams. Wayne Duke, chairman of the NCAA basketball committee and commissioner of the Big Ten, said that one objective of the expansion, which takes effect next season, was "to spread income from the tournament over more institutions." That income is considerable. Schools playing in last season's tournament received $39,183.90 per game plus expenses, and the NCAA will have even more money to hand out next season, thanks to a new two-year TV contract with NBC that will bring in $18.5 million, nearly twice as much as the old one provided.

In addition to increasing the size of its postseason tournament—roughly one-fifth of the 257 schools in Division I basketball now will make it into the field—the NCAA also rescinded its rule limiting conferences to two representatives in the tournament. That rule, which was in effect only one year, proved especially unpopular in the perennially powerful ACC and the resurgent Big Ten, whose race ended last season in a tie among three schools, one of which, Purdue, was left out of the NCAAs.

The NCAA's action will hurt the rival NIT tournament, which is made up largely of NCAA leftovers. What makes Pete Carlesimo, president of the Metropolitan Intercollegiate Basketball Association, the NIT's sponsor, even unhappier is an NCAA rule forbidding schools that receive NCAA tournament bids from playing in the NIT. "Because of the money [NIT participants received about $13,000 per game last season], not many teams would pick our tournament over theirs," Carlesimo says. "But at least give them the right." He added that the NIT might bring an antitrust suit challenging the NCAA rule.

IN CONTEMPLATION OF ALI

A course dealing entirely with Muhammad Ali will be offered this fall at Manhattan's New School for Social Research. The non-credit course, the title of which, "A Tribute to a Champion," seems more appropriate for a testimonial dinner, will consist of seven 90-minute sessions and feature appearances by Joe Frazier and Norman Mailer as well as a screening of the movie *The Greatest*. The fee is $60, and Gabriel Grayson, the instructor, is hoping that the spirit of academic inquiry will be such as to fill the New School's 500-seat auditorium.

Grayson, a sign-language instructor and onetime Catholic seminarian, considers Ali a subject fraught with significance—as "the most recognizable man on earth," as "one of the greatest champions ever" and as a "symbol of the '60s." Grayson, who previously taught courses on Jesus and Houdini at the New School, feels that Ali was a logical next step. "I don't mean to sound irreverent," he says, "but certainly all three are great showmen." The course concludes with a scheduled appearance by Ali himself. That's like promising students in one of the New School's philosophy courses a guest appearance by Socrates.

HAVE SNEAKERS, WILL TRAVEL

For daily joggers who hate to miss a step, finding places to run on business trips used to pose problems. Not anymore. By staying in one of the growing number of hotels that make tracks and jogging trails available to guests, travelers can find running just as convenient—maybe even more so—than it is at home.

In some cases, guests can run right on the hotel's property. The Atlanta Hilton has its own 220-yard track, and Los Angeles' Bel Air Sands Hotel is putting a running trail on its grounds. Pittsburgh's Hyatt Regency makes life for the runner almost as easy. Guests automatically become members of an organization called the Hyatt Striders, members of which gather to work out on the outdoor quarter-mile track across the street at the Civic Arena. Similarly, guests at the Houston Oaks Hotel are allowed to use the five-laps-to-the-mile Tartan track that encircles the glass dome of the Galleria, a shopping complex next door.

Some hotels provide guests with maps showing measured runs through nearby parks and streets. The Capital Hilton in Washington suggests doing "Monumental Miles," a selection of 1.5-, three- and five-mile runs, each route passing by such landmarks as the Lincoln Memorial. The Sheraton in Boston charts a route that includes a section of the Boston Marathon course.

Also popular at hotels are "parcours." Along jogging paths, which are meant to be covered in a specified time, are exercise stations equipped with balance beams, chinning bars and the like. The Rye Town Hilton in New York's Westchester County offers a course with 18 stations. The Hyatt in Orlando has a 1.3-mile, 20-station layout, while San Francisco's Hyatt Regency has built a half-mile, nine-station course on adjacent sidewalks and parkland. Guests at a sister hotel, the Hyatt on Union Square, are encouraged to use the same course. Because of the perils of city traffic and fears that guests might get lost, they need not run to get there. They are taken the 12 blocks to the parcours at 7:15 a.m. and returned an hour later—by limousine.

GEORGIA ON EVERYBODY'S MIND

Georgia Rosenbloom, majority owner of the Los Angeles Rams, fired her stepson, Steve Rosenbloom, as the club's executive vice-president last week, escalating their unseemly family feud (SI, Aug. 13). The action by Carroll Rosenbloom's widow made Ram watchers wonder what might happen next. Will Georgia bring back former Ram Coach George Allen, whom she has been effusively praising? Will she scrap the club's proposed switch from the Los Angeles Coliseum to Anaheim Stadium? Will Steve, tapped by his father to run the Rams, sue Georgia?

The beneficiary of Steve's dismissal is his bitter rival, Don Klosterman, whom Georgia restored to his old job as the Rams' day-to-day boss. There is so much bad blood between the young Rosenbloom and Klosterman that when Steve, who is popular with Ram players, let it be known that he planned to attend a team meeting to say goodby, Klosterman canceled the meeting. An impromptu get-together between Steve and the players occurred anyway, which raises an intriguing question: Seeing as players can be fined for missing a meeting, can they also be fined for *attending* one?

THEY SAID IT

- Ken Coleman, Boston Red Sox broadcaster, gushing over a long home run by First Baseman Bob Watson: "They usually show movies on a flight like that."
- Dennis Lamp, Chicago Cub pitcher, whose pitching hand was badly bruised when Lou Brock caromed a ball off it for his 3,000th hit: "I guess they'll be sending my fingers to Cooperstown." **END**


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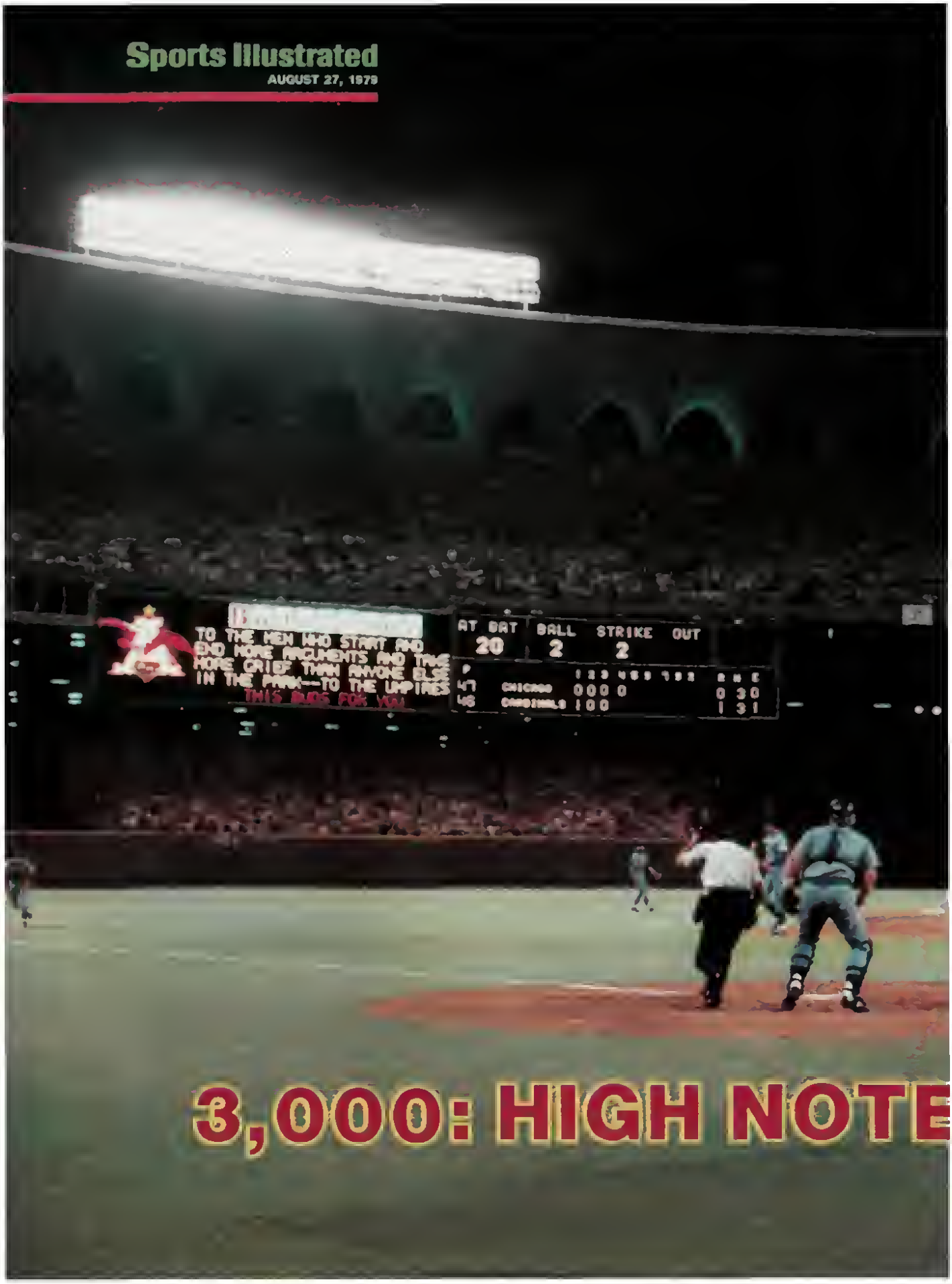
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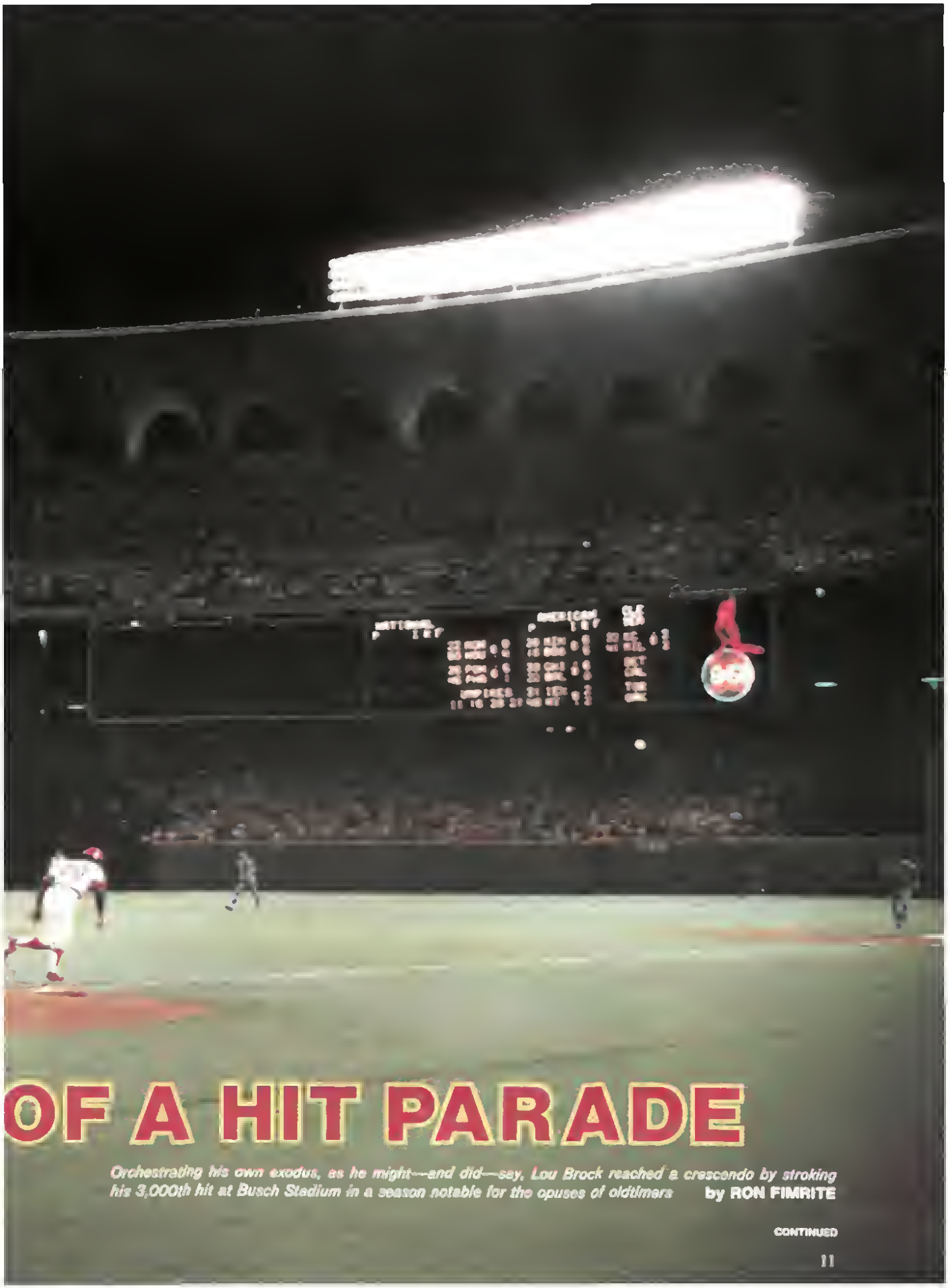
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Sports Illustrated
AUGUST 27, 1979



3,000: HIGH NOTE



OF A HIT PARADE

Orchestrating his own exodus, as he might—and did—say, Lou Brock reached a crescendo by stroking his 3,000th hit at Busch Stadium in a season notable for the opuses of oldtimers

by RON FIMRITE

CONTINUED



In 1962 Brock was a Cub rookie unaware that fame lay ahead in St. Louis.

On the humid evening of Aug. 13 in St. Louis' Busch Stadium, Cardinal Leftfielder Lou Brock, age 40, led off the fourth inning of a game against Chicago by hitting a hard line drive directly back at Pitcher Dennis Lamp. The ball caromed off Lamp's bare hand, painfully bruising three fingers, and bounced crazily into foul territory. Brock made it safely to first base without drawing a throw from Third Baseman Steve Ontiveros, who had picked up the rebound. Bedlam attended this seemingly unremarkable infield single. The crowd of 44,457 rose to render the Brock locomotive yell—"Lou! Lou! Lou!"—which is heard as often in St. Louis these days as Budweiser commercials. Stan Musial, demigod from another epoch, debouched from the stands with 80-year-old Cardinal Board Chairman August A. Busch Jr. in tow. Cameras flashed and microphones were thrust in Brock's beaming face so that he could impart his impressions of the moment to the adoring multitudes—all of this, mind you, smack in the middle of a big league ball game. Brock told everyone how happy he was it had happened at home, "it" being his 3,000th major league hit.

This mad scene will most likely be repeated in a few weeks, with different dramatis personae, when Carl Yastrzemski of the Red Sox, also 40, gets *his* 3,000th hit. Yaz needed only 15 after last weekend to become the 15th player in history, the seventh in this decade, and with Brock and Pete Rose, the third in the last two years to achieve 3,000. Accumulating that many hits may be as much a tribute to staying power as to ability, but what is truly remarkable about the three gaffers is that they are all still important to the success of their teams. Brock has been among his league's batting leaders all season, and so, naturally, has Rose. Yaz, battling off one injury after another, has played in all but six of the Red Sox games. On July 24 he hit his 400th career homer, and when he joins Brock and Rose, he will become the first American Leaguer to have more than 400 home runs among his 3,000 hits (Hank Aaron, Willie Mays and Musial have done it in the National League). For all of their success this year, Yaz, Brock and Rose are not the only Golden Oldies on the premises. There are 17 active major league players who are 37 or older, and most of them are enjoying seasons that players 10 or 15 years younger would happily exchange for their own.

Willie McCovey's 14 homers for the Giants this year have made him the leading lefthanded home-run hitter in National League history, and he needs only three more to pass Ted Williams for eighth place in the alltime rankings. San Diego's Gaylord Perry has moved into second place behind Walter Johnson in career strikeouts, with 3,130 to Johnson's 3,508. In addition, Perry is only 23 victories short of 300 for his career. Three hundred wins are to a pitcher what 3,000



After Brock struck his 3,000th hit, he was totally engulfed by his jubilant Cardinal teammates.

hits are to a batter, and, interestingly, there are now 14 players in each category. Yaz will give the hitters an edge unless Perry can even the score. In the modern game 300 wins seems less attainable than 3,000 hits. If and when Perry makes it, he will become the major leagues' first 300-game winner since Early Wynn in 1963, evidence that the bitters are lasting longer these days.

Perry is not the only elderly pitcher around. Atlanta knuckleballer Phil Niekro is leading the major leagues in complete games with 17 and innings pitched with 250. He collected his 200th career victory earlier in the season. Fred Norman has a winning record for the Reds, and Gray Panthers Jim Kaat and Luis Tiant have been effective for the Yankees. Willie Stargell is still pounding home runs for Pittsburgh, and Montreal's Tony Perez is driving in runs with youthful consistency.

Manny Mota of the Dodgers needs only one more pinch hit to set a major league career record of 145 in that esoteric category. Brock, Rose, Yaz, McCovey, Perry and Stargell must all be considered prime candidates for the Hall of Fame, and it is heartening to have them with us yet.

Few of these good old boys seem to be contemplating retirement. Yaz is signed up through the 1981 season. McCovey has at least another year remaining on his contract, and though he is ordinarily the mildest mannered of professional athletes, he bristles at even the slightest suggestion that he is getting a bit long in the tooth. Perry looks as if he can throw his reputedly unsanitary "sinker" forever, or at least as long as Niekro can loose his butterflies. Rose's contract with the Phillies will take him past his 41st birthday. Stargell is enjoying a second athletic childhood.

Only Brock will pack it in after this year. Nothing can change his mind about that, he said after his milestone hit, particularly now that he has assured himself of a grand exit. Brock is something of a phrasemaker, and when, in the hullabaloo following his 3,000th, he was reminded that he was bowing out on top, he remarked, "I always wanted to orchestrate my own exodus." No one expected such sweet music from him after his flat .221 performance in 1978. Even teammate Ted Simmons, as loyal a Brock booster as any of the fans shouting "Lou! Lou! Lou!" concedes that "it looked like the end for him last season. But by June of this year it was very clear this was not the case." Brock came out smoking and led the league in hitting for several weeks in the spring. A "mechanical defect," not advancing years, brought him to grief in '78, he stoutly maintains. He discovered too late last year that he had been hitting off his back foot. A simple adjustment in his stance corrected the deficiency, but Brock had the Lord's own time convincing the doomsayers that Judgment Day was not at hand. "A couple of people believed me," he says. "Ninety-eight per cent did not."

The accepted view around St. Louis was that he had done enough already. He was the game's single-season (118) and career (917) stolen-base record holder, and his .292 career batting average and 2,900 hits seemed sufficient credentials for the Hall of Fame. So what if he missed 3,000 hits? He should be content to play part-time this year, leaving the heavy duty to abler bodies. However, this view did not take into account Brock's fierce pride.

To prove he could still perform, he had to buck baseball's conventional wisdom about aging. Every player, says Brock, "is on a collision course between ability and desire." The "thoroughbred athlete" feels the crash first, but there are others clamoring to anticipate the accident. Owners, managers, journalists, fans, all want to be the first to forecast the athletic demise of the veteran. "The burden of mental anguish on the older player is placed there by those who can

continued

THE MOST GOLDEN OLDIES

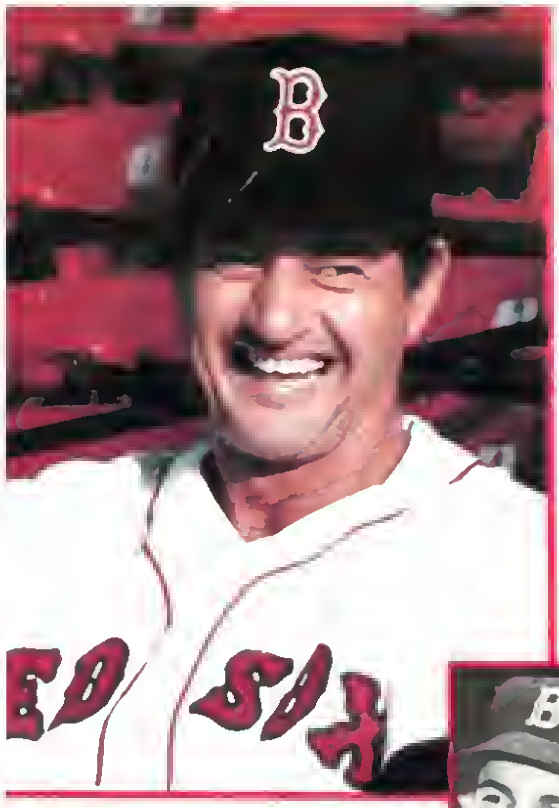
In this compilation, achievements so far in 1979 are listed on the top line following each player's name; career statistics are on the bottom line

HITTERS

NAME	AGE	TEAM	AVG.	HR	RBI
Manny Mota	41	Dodgers	.353	0	3
			.304	31	436
Lou Brock	40	Cardinals	.321	5	32
			293	149	894
Pete Rose	38	Phillies	.312	3	49
			.310	153	1,003
Willie Stargell	38	Pirates	.297	22	58
			.283	451	1,452
Carl Yastrzemski	40	Red Sox	.280	20	73
			.288	403	1,599
Tony Perez	37	Expos	.278	11	57
			.283	321	1,341
Rico Carty	38	Blue Jays	261	8	42
			.299	200	847
Willie McCovey	41	Giants	.258	14	51
			.271	519	1,533

PITCHERS

NAME	AGE	TEAM	WINS	LOSSES	ERA
Gaylord Perry	40	Padres	10	10	3.12
			277	216	2.93
Fred Norman	37	Reds	10	9	3.30
			99	95	3.59
Phil Niekro	40	Braves	15	16	3.74
			212	187	3.12
Luis Tiant	38	Yankees	9	6	3.86
			213	154	3.19





Boston's Yastrzemski made it to the majors in 1961. And now, ha is making history



Mota was a Giant rookie in 1962. In Los Angelas ha has become a pinch hitting giant



hardly wait to say, 'I told you so,' " says Brock. "There is this myth which says that at a certain age you automatically can't play. That attitude has existed for a hundred years in baseball, and no matter what you do, in spite of your determination and desire and your track record, you find yourself caught up in it." Older persons know this attitude extends well beyond the confines of professional sports. Who, indeed, is to say who is old, and when? Scott Fitzgerald considered himself decrepit at 30, Shaw complained in his 90s that youth was wasted on the young.

But many athletes stubbornly refuse to accept the infirmities of age and insist on staying that one season too long. "For some players, total ego satisfaction is dependent on being recognized as an athlete," says Dr. Bruce Ogilvie, professor emeritus of psychology at San Jose State, psychological consultant to the U.S. Olympic team and a pioneer in the field of sports psychology. "They [athletes] cannot imagine not receiving this recognition. Nothing else in life can give them their strokes. This can be a most compelling factor in extending a career beyond its normal boundaries. Finally, the love of the game and the love of the lifestyle make an athlete want to extend it as long as possible."

McCovey, protesting perhaps too much, is convinced that an athlete wears out psychologically long before he does physically. "An older player loses his interest before his body goes," he says. McCovey, like most of the current elderly stars, is in amazing physical condition. "He has lasted so long," says Dr. Fred Behling, the Giants' team physician, "because he treats the game as though it is a 12-month job. He works out hard in the off-season. He's in as good shape now as he was when I got to know him 10 years ago."

Most baseball players, surely most Americans, are in better shape now than their counterparts were 10 or 15 years ago, largely because of a revolution in training methods and a national concern for fitness that borders on obsession. "Baseball was a little slow in picking up the technology coming out of colleges," says Dr. Behling. "Since fewer baseball players spent time in college programs than athletes in other sports, they were not exposed to technological advances that could help them stay healthy. Nowadays, more baseball players are going to colleges and the technology is being used. More players have more contact with better medical care, and they have greater faith in it, because they are exposed to it in college." Mike Marshall, the Twins' 36-year-old relief pitcher, who has a doctorate in exercise physiology, must be the embodiment of this argument.

Yastrzemski has no such academic credentials, but he keeps close watch on the old body. While spending the winter at home in Florida, he observes a daily workout schedule as rigorous as the one he follows during the season. As a result, his current playing weight of 179 pounds is only a pound heavier than his weight when he broke in as a rookie 18 years ago. "I never stay away from workouts," he says. "I work hard. I've tried to take care of my body. I'll never look back and say I could have done more. I've paid the price in practice, but I know I get the most out of my ability. Pride, intense pride, that's what it comes down to—and not embarrassing yourself."

Whatever their commitment to fitness, the oldies come in a variety of shapes. Brock and Yaz are lean and hard. McCovey is massive and triangular. Rose is stocky. Kaat is muscular. But Stargell falls just shy of portliness, and San Diego Pitcher Mickey Lolich goes beyond it. Perry, whose stamina is phenomenal, is built tall and wide like a California redwood, but he works hard to keep these generous proportions constant. "One of the reasons I've lasted this long," he says, "is that I take care of myself. I don't smoke. I drink a little wine, but not much. I keep in shape during the off-season doing a lot of hard work around my farm in North Carolina."

To hear these neo-Bernarr Macfaddens extol the Spartan life, one would think the day of the hell raiser and the layabout in baseball has passed. It is stimulating then to hear Phil Niekro describe his own training regimen. "Staying in shape to me is cutting the grass or shoveling dirt in my yard. I know that wouldn't work for some of our pitchers,

but it works for me. I don't say anything about all their running and they don't say anything about the way I do it. The main thing is treating my arm like I would want to be treated. I've never burdened my arm. I think that's why it's let me pitch so long. As for the mental part, I don't think about a game until the first batter steps up to the plate. I could worry myself sick if I spent all day trying to figure how I was going to get him out. But you don't have to do it until he steps up there anyway, so why worry yourself about it? The only thing really different about the days I pitch is that I have to remember to leave passes for some friends. Otherwise, it's just another day."

Oldtimers have starred in past seasons, of course, but seldom have so many done so well at the same time. Ted Williams won batting championships in 1957 and '58 when he was 39 and 40, hitting a rousing .388 with 38 homers in '57. Satchel Paige, whose counsel about never looking back ("something may be gaining on you") is now gospel, did not even start playing major league ball until he was well past 40, and Hoyt Wilhelm was still pitching at 48. The sybaritic Babe Ruth, who supposedly trained on spirits and flappers, hit 34 homers in 1933, when he was 38, and Ty Cobb hit 357 in 1927, when he was 40. Many years later, Lefty O'Doul, himself an extraordinary hitter, was asked what he thought Cobb would hit "if he were playing today." "Oh, about .330," replied O'Doul after some thought. "Is that all?" inquired his companion. "Well," said Lefty, "you have to remember the man is 71 years old."

By ordinary standards, baseball's codgers are not old at all. In most activities a man is approaching his prime, not passing it, when he reaches his late 30s and early 40s, so time is unnaturally compressed in sports. Brock may be a Methuselah in the Cardinals clubhouse, but in the boardrooms, where he spends many more hours pursuing myriad business enterprises, he is a mere pup. What a melancholy fate awaits the veteran athlete: he must endure the indignities of old age when he is a young man.

The premature aging process is all part of the game. The senior baseball player, like the senior citizen, must find his place, and in the modern game this is becoming increasingly difficult. As Brock says, the game is structured so that the old fellows are continually involved in an almost Spencerian struggle for survival. "When the most recent basic agreement between the players and management was reached," says Brock, "paternalism went out the window. Suddenly, there was no room for the older players. We were under fire. In the old days, the young players were on the field and the older ones were on the bench, in reserve. Now the whole composition of a team has changed. The young players are everywhere—on the field and on the bench. The older players you see today are the cream of the crop. They are there only because they still have something to offer—something beyond mere promotional value. They are the survivors. It is now survival of the fittest."

The threat of enforced retirement should be incentive enough, but Brock thinks the old guys need something more to drive them on. "You have to decide what your purpose *is* in this game," he says. "You have to have that quest for the final moment of glory. You have to have something left you want to achieve. Jim Bouton may be the epitome here. He made his comeback just to have that moment on a mound again. Once it happened, it was all over for him. The quest was over. I suppose I'm fresh out of dreams now, but I still want to leave with a fine performance to crown my career. And really, I'm not fulfilled yet. I still keep dreaming about a man named Billy Hamilton."

Hamilton, who played most of his career before the turn of the century, is credited with 937 stolen bases, although some of these were awarded, according to the rules of the time, for going from first to third on a single. Brock has the accepted modern stolen-base record of 929—12 of them coming this year—but he wants nine more to erase the stigma of Hamilton. He is 40 now, and not the greyhound he once was, so his quest may seem a trifle quixotic, but Lou Brock and his grizzled contemporaries have proved time and again this season that there is no such thing as the impossible dream. END

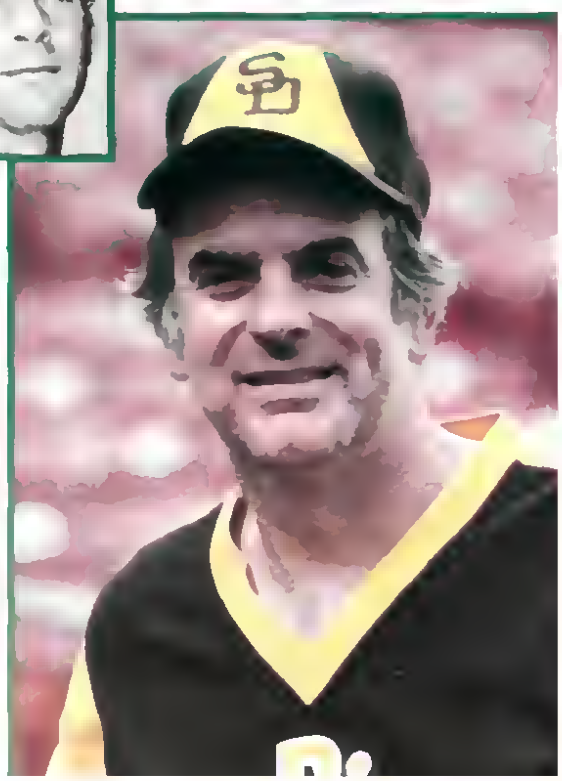




Niekro was a minor leaguer with major ideas in 1961. Then he knuckled down.



Perry's outstanding season with the Giants in 1966 set his appetite for many more.





AN AWESOME WARNING FROM THE SEA

Howling winds and mountainous waves caught the 306-boat Fastnet Race fleet in open watars off Britain, claiming 15 lives **by JACK KNIGHTS**

The Fastnet, Britain's classic offshore yacht race, had a proud history of safe accomplishment stretching back to 1925. In 27 races the only fatality had been a middle-aged sailor who suffered a heart attack in 1977. The 28th Fastnet was tragically different. On Saturday, Aug 11, 306 yachts flying the flags of 20



Under the firm hand of helmsman Jim Mattingly, race winner Tenacious charges through the seas

nations set out in early afternoon from Cowes, the venerable sailing town on the Isle of Wight, tacking down-tide in a light westerly. Their destination was Fastnet Rock off Ireland's Cape Clear; their final port Plymouth on the Channel coast (*see map, page 19*).

By last weekend, fewer than 88 yachts had finished the race, 23 boats had been abandoned, 136 competitors had been plucked from the sea or their boats in a massive rescue mission—and 15 sailors were dead, 12 Britons, two Americans and one Dutchman. In addition, three men and one woman, who were following the race in a trimaran, also died, bringing the toll to 19.

On Monday evening, Aug. 13, a wind approaching hurricane force had sprung up from the west, and the great fleet, without adequate warning, was caught

continued



A wall of water looms above Kialoa, the American 79-footer that rounded the Fastnet Rock first

TRAGEDY AT SEA *continued*

at its most vulnerable, stretched between the Scilly Islands, off the western tip of England, and the Irish coast. Winds gusting to 75 knots had wrought more havoc than in all previous British offshore races put together. It was the worst disaster in the expanding sport of ocean racing, and newspapers worldwide were quick to batten upon it.

Indeed, there was much to report: boats with a dozen and more men aboard were sledgehammered down into the sea and rolled through full 360-degree turns; solid green water slammed across decks; men jumped from disabled boats, hoping to be picked up by helicopter; sailors drifted for hours in life rafts scanning the horizon for help.

Few could have had a more harrowing trial than Britain's Simon Fleming, 26, and his fellow crewmen aboard the 37-foot *Trophy*. "All eight of us took to the life raft," he said. "The waves were like mountains, up to 40 feet high. Four times in the early hours, the raft turned turtle, and each time all eight of us managed to scramble back. Then we were hit a fifth time and two of the crew disappeared.

"The raft took such a bashing that it split in two. I was on one part, the others on the other part. It was bitterly cold, and as dawn broke one man died on board the raft."

The Fastnet has always been a favorite of those who would test themselves against the sea. Even if the winds are light there is a pilotage problem down Britain's craggy southwest coast and around the jutting headlands. Strong tides squeeze and swirl here. Competitors must decide whether it is better to head out to sea to find more wind or stay close to the shore and cheat the east-running flood tide.

The true ocean race begins at Land's End. One hundred fifty miles northwest across the open sea, 10 miles off the Irish coast, stands the target, the Fastnet Rock, shaped like a hat, its lighthouse tucked into one side like a feather. This is the lee end of the Atlantic, where the depressions and the fogs fetch up. From the Rock back, the course leads outside the Scillys, marked by Bishop Rock. Finally comes a hop to the finish in Plymouth that, though short, can sometimes take days because of the powerful tides. Total distance: 605 sea miles.

In recent years—in 1973, '75 and yet again in '77—the race had disappointed those who sail for the hell of it. The Fast-

Wind-whipped spray envelops Tenacious, as it did all the Fastnet boats at one time or another—unpleasant but preferable to green water on deck



net, they felt, had gone soft. Sailors reminisced about the 1957 race, generally reckoned to be the toughest of them all. Forty-one boats started that year and 29 had quit before Land's End, outward bound. The American yacht *Carina II* won (she would again in '75), though frames in her wooden hull cracked and the crew had to man the pumps all the way around the course. When she crossed the finish, skipper Dick Nye removed the cigar from his mouth and said, "O.K., boys, you can let her sink now."

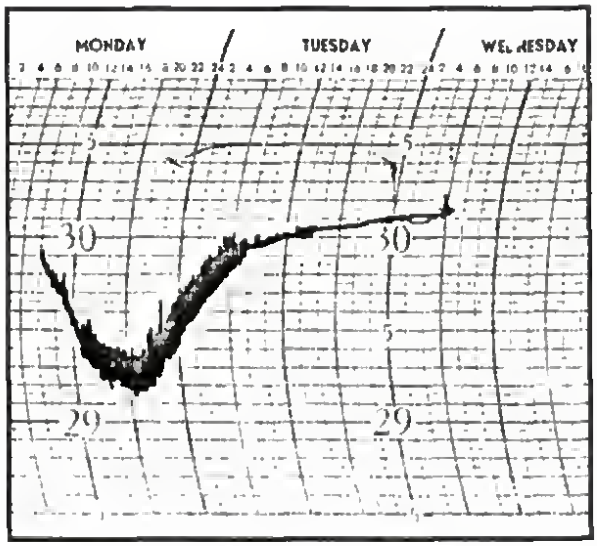
Nye and his son, Dick Jr., were back for the 1979 Fastnet with another *Carina*. They finished 22nd this time. "The 1957 gale was on from the start and blew till the finish, so it didn't catch anyone out," said Dick Jr. "This time the storm came suddenly, and it came so quick the seas didn't have time to grow big and even. They were square and they gave us a shaking."

Those who got just a shaking were the lucky—or well-prepared—ones. Said Arthur Moss of the *Camargue*, "I never thought I would see a steering wheel, complete with a man attached, soar into the seas. Thank God for our life ropes."

This summer England's weather had been unusually warm and settled. Then at the beginning of August, with the start of Admiral's Cup competition, a five-race series culminating in the Fastnet, it got rough. On Aug. 2, Force 5 (19-24 mph) winds coming out of a black sky broached the boats merrily. On Aug. 9, in the middle of Cowes Week, England's international regatta, came a full-bore gale.

For the Fastnet start on the following Saturday there was an uneasy weather truce. Though the westerly head wind was light, 12 to 20 knots was forecast for the Fastnet area for the next couple of days. That evening a chill, gray fog blew in off the Channel, making one think of Shakespeare's omens and portents. Through Sunday the boats crept down the Channel, some favoring the bays, some the open sea. It wasn't till the early hours of Monday that they began to filter past Land's End.

At 4 p.m. on Monday a weather forecast promised a Force 8 (39-46 mph) southwest gale later that evening off Plymouth, with a Force 4-5 increasing to 6-7 for the Fastnet Rock area. Many were almost becalmed when they received this news.



On Monday evening Boomerang's barograph plunged to an ugly 29.13

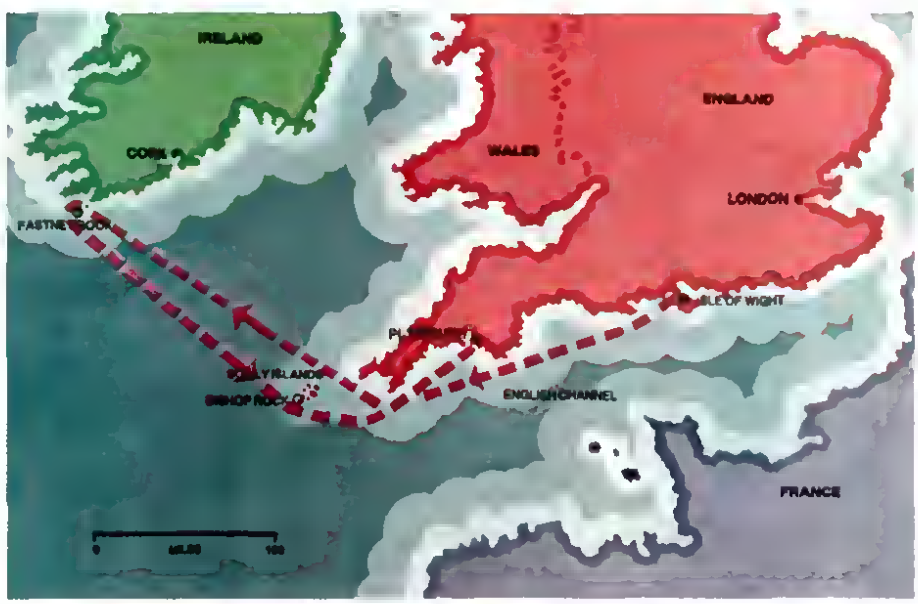
At 12:50 that afternoon, the 79-foot *Kialoa*, skippered by Jim Kilroy of Los Angeles, heading the fleet, had turned the Fastnet Rock in a 12-18 mph wind. By the time Ted Turner's 61-foot *Tenacious* made Fastnet, 6:31 p.m., full sail was excessive. Turner, the 1977 America's Cup defender and Fastnet record-setter with *American Eagle* in 1971, had *Tenacious* reefed as she turned.

When the wind gauge hit a steady 40 knots, Turner poked his head through the main hatch, studied the sea with the care of a connoisseur and remarked, "Gee, those are big waves." By midnight *Tenacious* was down to three reefs in the main and her smallest working jib, yet she was still making 10 knots. Soon the main was dropped completely.

As the wind veered to the west it headed the smaller boats struggling up to the Fastnet Rock. Yachtsmen began to relearn that in gusts of more than 60 knots, craft under 40 feet cannot make progress against the wind. And those under 30 become fully occupied with the simple necessity of staying afloat.

At midnight the British Meteorological Office warned, "The depression has deepened alarmingly in the last 12 hours and the worst is still to come." From midnight on, all but a very few of the small craft and many of the large were giving up on rounding the Rock and continuing the race. They were either lying ahull with no sail and the crew below, or running before the gale under bare poles. Or they were sending out maydays.

Yachts would persevere till *continued*



From the Isle of Wight the fleet sailed down the Channel and on to Fastnet Rock off the south coast of Ireland. For those who made it, the finish was at Plymouth. Only 88 boats did

a particularly big sea knocked them flat or swept their decks, taking crewmen to the limit of their lifelines—and sometimes, when the harness broke, beyond. Some were washed out of the cockpit by one wave, then miraculously washed back by another. The 36-foot *Tiderace* was rolled through 360 degrees when attempting to run under bare poles. Her mast was broken and two men were swept off her deck. One lost contact with the yacht when his harness broke. Somehow fellow crew members got a line to him and brought him aboard.

Each yacht seemed to receive the full force of one particularly ugly brute of a wave. Britain's former Prime Minister Ted Heath was shaken when his 44-foot *Morning Cloud* was knocked over more than 90 degrees. The 42-foot *Lancer* was rolled well below horizontal even though she wasn't setting a stitch of sail. Those below, including owner Roger Fuller, were injured by the impact, he being gashed in the face. "In 40 years of yachting I have never seen anything like it," said Fuller.

With 40-footers in such straits, the plight of 30-footers farther down course was nothing short of desperate. In the race for the first time were a dozen 00D34s, a new breed of offshore one-designs. They were from the drawing board of the celebrated Doug Peterson of San Diego and were built of fiber glass in a patented, extra-strong process.

Three of these 00D34s, through no weakness of construction, had to be abandoned. One at least, *Griffin*, operated by the Royal Ocean Racing Club, was rolled 360 degrees. Her skipper, Stewart Quarrie, reckoned that for a full *half minute* she remained upside down. During that time, *Griffin* took in so much water that once on an even keel again, her crew took to the life raft. For a long time they drifted, firing flares. Then the raft capsized. Somehow they managed to right it and clamber back aboard.

In spite of their difficulties the sailors on *Griffin* were more fortunate than those on the 35-foot *Ariadne*, owned and sailed by Frank Ferris, an American yachtsman living in London. *Ariadne* was dismasted and may have rolled over. Two of the crew were rescued by helicopter, but four others, including Ferris, perished.

The Royal Navy air station at Culdrose near Land's End is one of the biggest in Europe, with close to 100 helicopters, but only five were fully operational when the storm hit. The five were in the air within minutes. Helicopters rescued three men from *Grimalkin* (another two died), one from the sea near the dismasted French yacht *Tarantula*, the entire crew of five of the 30-foot *Magic*, two from *Trophy* (another three were lost), the crew of eight off *Camargue*.

Ireland had come into the Fastnet leading the 18 other Admiral's Cup nations on points. *Golden Apple of the Sun*, whose crew included the yacht's designer, Ron Holland, was the most highly regarded Irish yacht. She surfed off over the giant seas headed toward the Bishop, till, some 40 miles short, she came to a halt when she broke her ultramodern, ultralight, carbon-reinforced rudder. The crew tried to jury-rig a rudder from the spinnaker poles, but these "snapped like twigs," according to Holland. So they decided to batten down and sit out the storm below. Late on Tuesday afternoon their radio picked up a forecast of another severe gale approaching. Experienced, young and tough though they were, the sailors did not relish the prospect of a rerun of the last 12 hours. When a helicopter hovered above and demanded, "Are you coming or aren't you?" all 10 of the crew on *Golden Apple* elected to take the skyhook.

By noon on Tuesday the wind had dropped to around 18 mph and the worst was over. At 1:55 p.m. the 77-foot *Condor of Bermuda*, the first yacht to finish, set a new course record of 71 hours 25 minutes 23 seconds, almost eight hours faster than Turner's mark. *Condor* is owned by Bob Bell, as British and as burly as a bulldog, and had a crew of 22, which included nine New Zealanders who had sailed her around the world in the last Whitbread Race.

Though *Kialoa* had led *Condor* by 67 minutes at the Fastnet Rock, *Condor* beat her home by more than 28 minutes by driving harder and risking a tighter turn inside the giant overfalls, the breaking waves, at Bishop Rock, which most yachts gave a wide berth.

Once inside the Lizard, *Condor*'s crew dared a small spinnaker. Later their eyes glistened with elation as they told of the broaches that followed. Once they had broached head-to-wind so that the kite had filled aback and driven them sternward at three knots. Then the boat had spun round on her heel, the kite had filled with a bang and they were off again at 14 knots. "It was one of our better three-point turns," said Peter Blake of New Zealand.

When *Kialoa* came alongside in Plymouth's Millbay Dock, courteous congratulations were exchanged. Then Jim Kilroy clambered painfully up the dockside

continued



Sailors on the Dutch destroyer Overijssel pay their last respects to a crewman from Britain's Trophy

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One boat tried for four hours to round Fastnet Rock, then gave up

ladder to a waiting ambulance. Several ribs had been cracked when the wind blew two of his crew down the deck on top of him.

Eight and a half hours later, 40 minutes outside his own '71 record, Turner crossed in *Tenacious*. With a corrected time four hours better than *Condor*'s, the man and boat that in 1979 had already taken the Miami-Nassau, the Miami-Montego Bay and the Annapolis-Newport races had triumphed again, this time in the midst of tragedy.

Turner didn't let the loss of life dishearten him. "It's no use crying. The king is dead, long live the king," he said. But he did allow himself to be impressed by the weather. "That ain't the ultimate storm, but I will grant you it was rough. We couldn't have taken much more wind and continued to race, but we were never in danger. If I thought we were in danger, I would have pulled out. Really, I'm amazed that more weren't lost."

Turner's navigator, British-born Peter Bowker, can now claim to be the only man to have navigated winners of the big three: the Fastnet, the Sydney-Hobart and the Bermuda. To Bowker a storm is a storm is a storm. "Some compare this with the 1972 Bermuda, but to tell the truth I wasn't all that impressed with that one at the time." He should have been impressed with this one but claimed he had been below most of the time. In fact he had once come on deck with the RDF set to get a fix on the Bishop and been knocked so hard by a wave that he dented the steering wheel and nearly took helmsman Jim Mattingly overboard with him as he headed for the lee rail. The RDF set vanished.

Like *Tenacious*, the 64-foot *Boomerang* had pressed hard through the storm. All aboard had known something big was coming when the barometer dropped alarmingly on Monday afternoon. After turning Fastnet, *Boomerang* charged along at 10 knots under scant canvas. According to crewman Bill Rudkin, on one memorable deseent from the top of a lofty wave and propelled just then by a great gust, the boat's wind gauge registered an incredible 100 knots and the speed indicator showed 24 knots. Deducting the 24 from the 100, Rudkin figured the wind hit some 75 knots—hurricane strength.

Dennis Conner, skipper of Seymore Sinett's *Williwaw*, said it was the worst weather he had ever experienced at sea. His main regret was that the U.S. Admiral's Cup team had played it too safe, particularly as the storm was easing. As a result, the Australians, with their background of huge seas and winds in the Bass Strait, had taken the Cup, snatching it out of the Americans' grasp. The Aussies finished third, fourth and 13th among the Cup boats in the Fastnet. The U.S. came in fifth (*Imp*, Dave Allen, skipper), 15th (*Williwaw*) and 28th (*Aries*, John Marshall, skipper).

Tragedies hinge upon the coincidence of unlikely events. First, this storm, short though it was, was the first of such strength in several English summers. Second, the Meteorological Office did not anticipate its severity. Third, it struck over the only three-day period in two years when 300 yachts would be exposed to the same patch of turbulent, open water. Fourth, though hulls and rigs—but not rudders—stood up well to the punishment, I personally suspect that ever flatter, wider yachts produced by the Offshore Rating Rule, which have shown they broach so easily in sheltered water, are more prone to be rolled or knocked flat in open water.

Obviously the top sailors fared best. Their past experience made them feel more at home, and their boats were faster, thus they had turned the Fastnet Rock before the worst of the storm hit. It was the weekend sailor who suffered most. After the easy races of '73, '75 and '77, he was prepared to believe the Fastnet was a doddle. The waves that made one *Condor* crewman think of the paintings J. M. W. Turner had done after being lashed to the mast with his sketchbook, made others think of imminent death.

With an angry flick of its mighty tail, the sea had warned weekend sailors everywhere, "Do not trifle with me." **END**



"It's no use crying," commented Turner on the loss of life. "The king is dead, long live the king."



HE SAVED HIS BEST FOR THE VERY LAST

Matthew Saad Muhammad withstood John Conteh's sharpest punches—but required his cut man's deftest touch to keep him in the bout—before rallying in the final rounds to retain his WBC light heavyweight title **by CLIVE GAMMON**

He had a worse chance, the Boardwalk wiseacres reckoned, than a silver dollar in an Atlantic City slot machine. He was a yesterday man with only one good hand. His last two fights had been near-fiascoes. What sort of shot would he have against Matthew Saad Muhammad, the 25-year-old WBC world light heavyweight champion who last year put the experienced Richie Kates into the hospital and who had won his title in April in a bloody bout with the redoubtable Marvin Johnson?

But at the Resorts International Hotel in Atlantic City last Saturday, it was Saad Muhammad who was reeling on the ropes in the 12th round, the left side of his face streaming with blood, and it was John Conteh of Liverpool, England, the no-hoper, who was standing in the middle of the ring grinning wolfishly.

At that moment it seemed that the only thing in doubt about the fight was when the referee would stop it. Conteh's cruelly precise left jab was destroying Saad Muhammad. Three of them, delivered jackhammer fast, had just caused the blood to spout afresh from a cut above his left eye. Saad Muhammad came back swinging wildly, almost unbalancing himself. But it was clear that he was half-blinded by his own blood.

Saad Muhammad, plain Matt Franklin until he won his title this year, has all the right antecedents of a contemporary champion: a bitterly deprived childhood in the slums of South Philadelphia, orphanhood, foster parents, street rumbles, reform school, jail. Then the dawning of the light and the discovery of Islam. And the name change.

"The old name did well," he said, "but I wanted to change it. I'm a brother. Now, when they holler out my Islam name, they'll know I'm a black man."

For the Conteh fight, Saad Muhammad trained at Muhammad Ali's old camp at Deer Lake, Pa. and he speaks reverentially of his first meeting, in July, with Ali. "He touched me," Saad Muhammad says. "He overthrew my heart. He told me, 'Remember, a Muhammad cannot lose.' "

Saad Muhammad, in fact, had not lost a fight since a controversial split decision at the hands of Eddie Gregory in March

Conteh (right) punched almost exclusively with his left, and he managed to browbeat the champ

1977. He had earned his title in about as hard a way as possible in a division suddenly crowded with good fighters.

Among whom, according to most experts, John Conteh should no longer have been numbered, though Saad Muhammad had paid him tribute before the fight: "I admire him as a former champion. He requires the best of me."

Then reality broke through. "Listen," he said, "I studied Conteh. He's that same Conteh, comes on like a billy goat. This man *specifies* on butting. Also, he has tactics like stomping on your feet. But, as his prime resource, he uses his head. And suddenly a guy is bleeding."

Bleeding. Before the fight, Saad Muhammad's first defense of his title, it seemed only his vulnerable brows could make him a loser. In his title-winning fight in Indianapolis, his face was a mask of blood when in the eighth round Johnson went down for a count of nine and the referee stopped it.

The eyebrows were stitched up and the fight with Conteh, originally planned for July 22, was postponed to give them time to heal. But that tightly stretched skin, so prone to split, looked certain to be Conteh's chief target.

Conteh was contemptuous of the allegations that he butts—a foul known in Britain as "giving the Glasgow Hello." "They have a referee in the ring, don't they?" he said.

Except for that terse rejoinder, Conteh looked, spoke and acted very differently from the cocky, handsome, obstinate, self-destructive kid who was a sporting idol in England when he won the WBC light heavyweight title in October 1974. He held the crown until May 1977, when he was stripped of it for refusing to defend against Miguel Cuello of Argentina.

Conteh was 28 this spring; his hairline is fast receding, but the most noticeable change about him is his subdued manner and a new voice that is so low that the flat Liverpool vowels are almost inaudible.

Conteh's biggest pre-fight worry centered on his right hand. At the peak of his career, almost four years to the day before the Atlantic City bout, he broke it badly in a 10-round win over Willie Taylor in Scranton, Pa. It was put back together surgically, but he broke it again in training. The injury accounts for the gaps in Conteh's record. Only one fight in 1976, only one in 1977. Then, last November, he hurt it again when, leaving a party in his Rolls-Royce, he hit six parked cars.

Since then he had fought twice. In April he drew with the veteran Jesse Burnett, and in June he defeated a somewhat obscure American, Ivy Brown. He was unimpressive in both bouts. And he barely used his right.

In the early probing rounds of Saturday's fight, it looked as if Conteh's right was going to be absent from this encounter, too, though the slow-footed Saad Muhammad, whose timing seemed erratic, gave him chances to employ it. It was the left jab that Conteh used most, but it was not until the fifth round that its effect became apparent.

Early in that round, Saad Muhammad seemed to be getting the measure of Conteh. For the first time he caught him with a solid right to the head, opened up a little cut on his cheek and corralled him in a corner. But Conteh was counterpunching with his left. When the bell sounded, Saad Muhammad walked over to his corner holding a glove to his brow, and as soon as the sixth started, Conteh again hit him on the forehead with a jab. The blood began to flow.

For the next six rounds, the fight was really between Conteh and Adolph Ritacco, the renowned cut man—this was his 29th title fight—whom Saad Muhammad had recruited against the wishes of his trainer, Nick Belfiore. Between each round Ritacco would do desperate patching; during each round, Conteh would mercilessly undo Ritacco's handiwork. Even though Conteh used his right hand with effect no more than a half a dozen times in the fight, his left seemed to be doing all the work necessary.

Saad Muhammad was to claim that Conteh had butted him in the second round, but he subsequently backed away from that charge, saying, "He somewhat beat me with his left. First, he made a lump, then he opened it up with jabs. But I had a good cut man."

And, in effect, it was the cut man who beat Conteh, patching, patching, keeping Saad Muhammad in the fight until, in the 14th round, the champ finally caught Conteh with a massive left hook that put him down for an eight count and then a right that dropped him for another count of eight. They were stunning blows to the heretofore overconfident Conteh, who only needed to stay out of range for a couple of rounds to win. As it was, the judges scored it 144–143 and 146–139 for the champion; referee Carlos Padilla had it 147–142.

Later, a heavily patched Saad Muhammad intoned, "I have a road to travel. I am the chosen light heavyweight in the world and I will never lose my title." Perhaps not, but he'd better keep Adolph Ritacco in his corner. END



By dropping Conteh twice in the 14th round, Saad Muhammad finally turned the tide in his favor

TRYING TO GET THEIR FEET IN THE DOOR

All the glossy statistics and press clippings from college games don't mean a thing when a rookie appears at en NFL training camp, as several record-busting kickers have ruefully discovered during the preseeson **by JOE MARSHALL**

Considering the Texas tales about Russell Erxleben's kicking, it's a wonder that Francis Ford Coppola didn't purchase the movie rights to his first professional placekick, then hire Marlon Brando to hold the ball and the entire Chinese army to rush the kicker. After all, when Erxleben (pronounced IRK-slay-ben) played at Texas, where he tied the NCAA record for longest field goal with a 67-yarder and also led the nation in punting, he was called "the greatest kicker in the history of college football" by SMU Coach Ron Meyer. Apparently the pros agreed. In May, New Orleans, picking 11th, made Erxleben the fourth kicker ever selected in the first round of the NFL draft, then signed him to a long-term contract that reportedly made him the first million-dollar kicker.

Come with us now as we recreate that historic first kick. The date: July 28. The site: Dodgertown, the Vero Beach, Fla., training complex used by the Saints, who this day are scrimmaging Miami. With a fourth down at the Dolphins' 28-yard line, New Orleans Coach Dick Nolan calls for a field goal. The distance: 45 yards. A fairly prodigious kick for most, but certainly a mere chip shot for the rookie they call "Thunderfoot." Blare of trumpets. Roll of drums.

The crowd quiets. Center Mark Meseroll crouches over the football. The snap darts back to the holder, Ed Burns, who places it carefully on the turf, laces pointing toward the distant goalpost. Erxleben steps forward. For a split second he seems to hesitate, then his powerful right leg swings toward the football. Surely somewhere out there a representative of the Hall of Fame is waiting to claim this pigskin for posterity. The ball soars upward. Then, like a wounded duck, it flutters helplessly and dives back to the ground, not 15 yards from the line of scrimmage. Cut. CUT!

Such was the inauspicious debut of Russell Erxleben, kicking star. Afterward, he described it as "the most embarrassing moment of my life." And, much to his chagrin, the embarrassing moments have not stopped. Erxleben has often said that the hallmark of a great kicker is consistency. Well, this summer he has been consistently horrible.

In the Saints' first exhibition, also against the Dolphins, Erxleben, who placekicks in the old-fashioned straight-ahead style, missed his two field-goal tries, from 32 and 35 yards. And he shanked a punt 19 yards to set up the deciding touchdown in Miami's 14–7 win. In New Orleans' second exhibition, a 13–6 loss to the Chicago Bears, Erxleben had an extra-point attempt blocked and punted three times for a measly 32-yard average. He also kicked off once, but only to the 11-yard line. Still, that was a seven-yard improvement over his lone kickoff the previous week.

Despite Erxleben's difficulties, the Saints have not lost faith in him. He is still battling incumbent Rich Szaro for the placekicking job he was supposed to win summarily, and last week he inherited the punting duties when veteran Tom Blanchard, who ranked fifth in the NFL in 1978 with a 42-yard average, was traded to Tampa Bay.

On Saturday night in Tampa, two days after the trade, Blanchard badly outkicked Erxleben as the Buccaneers handed the Saints another 14–7 loss. Erxleben averaged 35.7 yards on nine punts, including another shank that needed a good roll to cover 32 yards. Blanchard punted seven times for a 42.2-yard average and received standing ovations after two extra-long kicks. One New Orleans sportswriter grumbled, "Maybe we should see if we can trade away next year's first-draft choice to get our old kicker back."

So people are beginning to wonder if the team has wasted its first-round draft pick on a flop. Erxleben himself says the pressure on him to kick well is not as severe as the pressure Nolan must be feeling. "A lot of people told Coach Nolan not to use a first-draft choice for a kicker," he says. "They felt the Saints needed a linebacker and that the team could pick up a kicker in a nearby bar."

Erxleben's woes have been well publicized in a summer when rookie kickers have been in the spotlight all over the NFL. In Philadelphia, the Eagles, unable to draft Erxleben themselves, have entrusted their placekicking to third-round pick Tony Franklin of Texas A&M, who set 18 NCAA records and once booted field goals of 64 and 65 yards in a game against Baylor.

Franklin kicked barefoot in college and is kicking barefoot in the pros—although that may change when the Eagles play at Green Bay on Nov. 25. He was sidelined for two weeks this summer by a wart on his kicking foot and so far has missed on three of four field-goal chances in preseason games. On occasion, Franklin swings his leg a fraction of an inch too low, catching his toe and causing a blood vessel to pop. The blood



The Barefoot Boy, Philadelphia s Tony Franklin, has hit on only one of his four field-goal attempts



Matt Bahr's prospects were jolted when Gerela booted two 48-yarders.

mixes with the green fuzz of the artificial turf and gives Franklin what he calls "a Christmas toe."

In Oakland, Errol Mann, who missed extra points in five consecutive games last year, has already been cut loose by the Raiders, and his successor—for the moment—is Jimmy Breech, who was working in a Bay Area cardboard factory when the Raiders signed him late last season.

Another veteran who had difficulty last year is Pittsburgh's Roy Gerela; he never signed a contract, missed 14 of 26 field-goal attempts and then claimed that playing out his option had ruined his concentration. To light a fire under Gerela, the Steelers drafted Penn State Placekicker Matt Bahr, whose brother Chris kicks for the Bengals. Bahr quickly put pressure on Gerela by converting field-goal attempts of 41, 39 and 25 yards in the Steelers' opening exhibition. Gerela, who now has signed a new contract, responded to the competition last Friday by connecting for two 48-yard field goals in the Steelers' 27–14 win over the Jets. After the second one, Bahr turned to teammate Tony Dungy and said grimly, "I guess I'll see you when Pittsburgh comes to town." Bahr didn't say what town.

Miami's Garo Yepremian had no trouble with field goals last year, converting 19 of his 23 attempts, including his last 16 straight to tie an NFL record. His kickoffs were so short, though, that Coach Don Shula used his seventh-round draft pick for Oklahoma's Uwe von Schamann, who set an NCAA record by converting 125 straight extra points. Von Schamann's big problem is that no one can pronounce his first name. "The logical way to pronounce my name is 'YOU-we,' because that's the way it's spelled," he says. "But in German the 'w' is pronounced like 'v,' so my name is really pronounced 'OO-va.'

"During the four years I was at Oklahoma, my coach, Barry Switzer, never once pronounced my name correctly. Coach Switzer always called me 'You-va.' Every week on TV, on the Barry Switzer Show, he'd call me 'You-va von Shoeman.' He never got it right. I got to thinking that maybe Coach Switzer has one of those Arkansas speech defects." Von Schamann has made two of four field-goal attempts and has so impressed Shula with his deep kickoffs that, as the kicker says, "Some of the coaches now are calling me 'von Foot.' But the players call me all sorts of names. Tim Foley calls me 'You-glow.' I ask him, 'How come you call me You-glow?' He tells me, 'It's easier to pronounce.' Other guys call me 'You-ee' and 'You-vo.' At least Coach Shula knows how to pronounce my name. That's impressive. That makes me feel real good."

Strangely enough, Erxleben feels real good—about his kicking. Though his statistics don't show it, he believes he has kicked well enough in his month with the Saints and expects to improve. "It's just a matter of being all glassy-eyed, excited and nervous," he says.

Nevertheless, Erxleben is so confident about his future that he almost enjoys the ribbing he has been getting. When one of his practice punts fluttered 25 yards, there was a sideline chorus of "Quack, quack, quack. Shoot that duck." Guard Conrad Dobler turned to Harry Hulmes, the Saints' director of player personnel, and said, "Great No. 1 pick, Harry. When he goes, you're going with him."

Erxleben is not the first collegiate Super Foot to encounter difficulties in his rookie pro season. One problem confronting placekickers is that they cannot use their college kicking tees for field-goal or extra-point tries in the NFL; they must kick the ball off the ground. Steve Little, the record-setting Arkansas kicker who was drafted in the first round by St. Louis in 1978, has made only one field goal in an NFL game; his kicks—sans tee—don't get high enough.

Nolan hoped that Erxleben would be able to handle both the punting and placekicking. However, Szaro has spent the preseason suggesting that two jobs for Erxleben are one too many. Says Erxleben, "Szaro will come up to me and say, 'Why don't you just concentrate on punting? You'll get paid the same and you can work into placekicking more gradually.' He's trying to mess with my mind. He thinks I'm a dumb rookie. I'm a rookie, but I'm not dumb." SMD



New Orleans' Russell Erxleben has a $1 million contract, but the kicks have not been coming.



After her record 2:07.01 in the 200 butterfly, Mery T. took the victory stand with Bubbles the frog.

MARY T. GOES UP IN LIGHTS

No one glittered more brightly at the AAU championships than 14-year-old Mary T. Meagher, who can really fly

by JOE JARES and DEMMIE STATHOPLOS

Mary T. Meagher is 14 years old, has braces on her teeth and a toy stuffed frog named Bubbles. She is learning needlepoint and has a nervous giggle, and her schoolmates call her "Fishy." She is indeed at home in the water, for she is one of those American swimmers who seem to go directly from puberty to the Olympic Games.

Fishy Meagher is the brightest U.S. hope for gold medals in the women's butterfly events in Moscow. Last week at the AAU National Long Course Championships in steamy Fort Lauderdale, Fla., she set an American record in the 100-meter butterfly (1:00.19). Not bad for a kid who has yet to start the ninth grade, but in an even more impressive performance she chewed big chunks off her own world 200-meter butterfly record of 2:09.77, set five weeks before at the Pan-Am Games. In the prelims the first day of the meet she lowered it to 2:08.41. In the final that night she dropped it to 2:07.01, surging through the water as if an Everglades alligator were snapping at her heels.

On the whole, though, the AAU meet wasn't a prime showcase for records, or even good times. The event was staged in a 50-meter pool adjacent to the Swimming Hall of Fame, on a peninsula jutting into the Intracoastal Waterway only a short block from the beach. The humidity was only a bit lower than it is in Rangoon. The water in the Hall of Fame pool wasn't Jacuzzi-hot, but it wasn't cool and stimulating either. The pool was also shallow (three and a half feet deep at each end), so there was too much turbulence.

For those reasons most of the performances didn't shake the foundations of the hall next door, or make any of the coaches stare in amazement at their stopwatches. Which makes Meagher's feats

PHOTOGRAPH BY MANNY MILLAN

even more impressive. In cool, deep water, there is no telling what she might have done.

Steve Gregg, the silver medalist in the 200 fly at the Montreal Olympics and now a graduate student in physiology at the University of Arizona, watched from the stands as Meagher churned to her 2:07.01. Two days later, after his own impressive win in the men's 200, he was still excited by Mary T.'s exploits.

"I remember when that was a good time for me, a man," he said. "That's a heck of a swim. I know that 2:07.01 is awful fast. If you look through the times this morning, a lot of men went slower than that. A *lot* of men. [Only five, actually.] That is an awesome swim."

Mary T. Meagher (pronounced MAW-her) is called Mary T. because the oldest of her 10 siblings is also a Mary, Mary G. The "T" stands for Terstegge, her mother's maiden oame. Her dad is a prosperous businessman (a handy thing when you have 11 children), chairman of the board of a company that distributes hardware and manufactures fireplace fixtures, toolboxes and tackle boxes.

The Meaghers live in Louisville, where Mary T. learned to swim at a country club when she was four. A few years later her older brother Jimmy, now 25 and an ex-butterfly record holder at Notre Dame, took her aside and gave her some tips in his specialty, never dreaming he was pointing her toward Moscow in 1980. Last fall she left the country club team and joined Louisville's Lakeside Swim Club, coached by Denny Pursley.

Pursley quickly saw that "she has a very unusual ability to maintain a constant speed at near maximum exertion for long periods of time," and he proceeded to assign her a workout schedule that would discourage a porpoise.

"If there's a sport more demanding as far as hours and effort expended are concerned," says Pursley, "I'd like to know what it is. You train 10 miles a day, five hours a day in the water, plus working with weights, year round. It takes four times longer to swim 10 miles than it does to run 10 miles. It's the most boring sport to train for. You can't see anything, you can't hear anything, and it's monotonous. If you're a runner, you can at least enjoy the seenery and listen to the birds."

And how does Mary T. view the grind? What about next season and the one after that? Will she continue to give 100% or will she—as so many have before her—begin to burn out psychologically? "I'll worry about that after the Olympics," she says. "Then I'll decide if I want to go on, to give up my time."

Most swimmers have to pace themselves more in the butterfly than in other events because it's more demanding. They tire faster and lose strength. As for Mary T., she just shrugs when asked if it's the hardest stroke. "It's not hard for me," she says. "I like it. I was always a butterflyer. It's a stroke where you can't really loaf, 'cause you'll sink if you do."

The truth is, Meagher thrives on the hard workouts. After setting junior records, last April she won her first national title, taking the 200-yard fly at the AAU short-course championships. At a local invitational meet in June she beat her Sullivan Award-winning heroine, Nashville's Tracy Caulkins, 16, by more than five secoods in the 200.

All was going beautifully. Then Pursley called the Lakeside team together and announced he will move this fall to Cincinnati, 100 miles away, to coach the Cincinnati Marlins. Some Louisville kids are sure to follow, but will Mary T. be one of them?

The Meaghers haven't decided. "Right now she's registered to go to Sacred Heart in Louisville," says her dad. "She's 14 years old and just going into her freshman year in high school, and that's a very traumatic experience in itself without having to go away from home."

If it is, Mary T. will never let on. "I never know how she's doing," says her mother, Floy. "She'll come home from some meet and I'll say, 'Well, how did you do?' And she'll just shrug and say, 'Oh, O.K.' "

"I'll bet that I've told more people that Mary T. is my sister than she's told people she swims," says sister Anne.

Mary T. has collected so many trophies over the years that nobody in the family knows how many there are. Or were. Because of a lack of space, Floy has been forced to throw some out. Mary T. won her first race at five, a 25-yard freestyle. She will tell you that she has "maybe a couple of dozen trophies." Her mother puts the count at more than a hundred. Not to mention countless medals and ribbons.

Chances are that most people know by now that the little Meagher girl (5′ 5″, 118 pounds) is in no danger of drowning; indeed she now shares the limelight with Caulkins, Cynthia (Sippy) Woodhead, 15, America's best female sprinter, and Kim Linehan, 16, who set a world record Sunday night in the 1,500-meter freestyle.

At Fort Lauderdale, Caulkins was beaten soundly by Meagher in the 200 fly but came back to win the 200- and 400-meter individual medleys and set an American record of 2:33.88 in the 200 breaststroke. Woodhead, from Riverside, Calif., won the 100, 200 and 400 freestyles and was third in the 800. Linehan, who swims for the Longhorn Aquatic Club in Austin, Texas, was timed in 16:04.49 in the 1,500, breaking the record of 16:06.63 set by Australia's Tracey Wickham last February. Linehan had set an American record of 8:24.70 in the 800-meter freestyle earlier in the week.

On the men's side, 18-year-old Jesse Vassallo was one of the stars, winning the 200 and 400 individual medleys. But Vassallo's high school and Mission Viejo teammate, Steve Barnicoat, upset him in the 200-meter backstroke. Rick DeMont, who had been stripped of a gold medal at the 1972 Olympics (SI, Aug 20) said he was encouraged by his times in the 800- and 400-meter freestyle relays. However, he failed to qualify for the 100-meter freestyle finals.

Two Montreal veterans, Gregg in the butterfly and Brian Goodell in the freestyle, look like possible gold medalists at Moseow, too. Goodell, 20, of UCLA and Mission Viejo, won the 400 free in a meet record 3:51.89, his best time in two years, and finished second to Rowdy Gaines in the 200.

U.S. Olympic Coach George Haines, like everybody else at poolside in Fort Lauderdale, was wowed by Mary T.—the Mary T. who emerged dripping and grinning after her world-record daily double, and the prospective Mary T.

"I think she is in a class by herself in the 200 fly," he said. "And she's probably just scratching the surface."

"I don't think much is going to happen between now and next year," said Olympic hero Mark Spitz, on hand to do TV commentary, "but I shudder to think what she could be doing if she continues to swim for, say, an additional four years with the same kind of training techniques."

It's the female butterflyers of the world who should be shuddering. END

'YOU'RE A GREAT HANDICAPPER, FOTO.'

'THANK YOU.'

'BUT SOMETIMES YOU SCREW UP.'



Not to hear Foto Lewis, Race Track Character and strip joint barker, tell it. When he bets according to his system, he's always right. It's just that most times someone, or thing, does him wrong

by ***DOUGLAS S. LOONEY***

Foto Lewis is 71 years old, looks 50 ("See, no fat on my neck"), acts 30, has a girl friend 23, and is—arguably, of course—the nation's No. 1 Race Track Character. Anything anybody else can do, Foto is sure he can do better. He dreams exclusively of faster horses and younger women—in that order. When he talks of himself, he speaks only in superlatives. At the moment, he is standing in the Bowie (Md.) Race Course grandstand, going berserk better than anybody.

"Jeez!" he screams. "The worst bum in the race wins and I lose $30. How could anybody pick that horse? You couldn't pick her because you like her. There's nuthin' to like. This is enough to drive a horseplayer craaazzzy. Look, this horse run twice and is ninth by 17 lengths and eighth by 20. You can't even say she ran better than her form, because she ain't got no form to run to. On top of that, it's a girl jockey. That broad was 100 to 1 herself, never mind the horse. If somebody had given me a ticket on that horse, I wouldn't have accepted it. If forced on me, I would have tore it up. I've slept with horses, drove 'em in vans, ridden 'em, studied 'em for 55 years—and I don't understand them. What's the winner's name? Sarah Fox? Oh, my God. Sarah Fox. I get beat by a horse named Sarah Fox." The horse, at 45 to 1, returned $91.80 on a $2 win ticket.

Foto slumps into his chair, alone in his agony. He asks a friend. "Why would anyone bet Sarah Fox?"

"Because," says the friend cheerfully, "she was in the race."

"Nope," Foto says, "this ain't on the level. She probably was doped. That's it. We'll read in a few days that she was doped. God, Sarah Fox. Somebody's name, huh? Somewhere there is a Sarah



Fox who's happy as all get out. Meanwhile, I lose my money."

He falls silent, exhausted from his outburst. He has been through this thousands of times, but the pain is always the same. And, like a fireworks display that makes one last explosion just when it seems about to fizzle out, Lewis pops off again. "Sarah Fox. For all I know, that could have been Spectacular Bid. Nobody can tell them apart. I bet my $30 and something called Sarah Fox runs like Citation."

Another Race Track Character yells, "Foto, Foto."

"Yeah."

"Shut up."

But Foto never shuts up. He is the preeminent Race Track Character. At every track, there is a handful of guys who come out every day and bet every race. Every one of them is a classic know-it-all. They argue and curse and point and exaggerate and suspect. They are known by names like Detroit Izzy or Champagne Larry. They are gluttons for punishment. A Race Track Character needn't bet a lot; in fact, part of his charm is that he bets so little but cares so much. The R.T.C. is never to be confused with the Big-Time Gambler, the guy who shows up at the track with a briefcase, a computer and cold blood. For the gambler the track is his business; for the R.T.C., the track is his life. Foto is a $10- to $20-a-race man. He usually takes about $200 to the track, though he has no intention of losing much of it.

"If you bet fast, you can't last," says Foto. "The worst thing is to get broke and have to stay home." That is shattering to an R.T.C., the ultimate in bad luck. It's far better to get beat by Sarah Fox than to be confined to quarters. The R.T.C. loves the horses.

continued

and hates the horses; loves the tracks and hates the tracks; loves himself and hates himself. "There are so many ways to lose," laments Foto.

Indeed, every R.T.C. knows deep down that he probably won't win, but he finds excitement in waiting to see just how he will lose. A classic example of the variety that racing offers the R.T.C. occurred at Atlantic City some years ago when a horse named Nautigal got command down the backstretch on the turf course. According to the *Daily Racing Form* chart of the race, Nautigal "was still clear turning into the stretch and, when roused with the whip, went through the inner hedge, unseated his rider and went into the lake." Foto once lost a winning bet when his horse was disqualified for biting another during the race. And, he says, five times in a row at Timonium in 1946 he had the winning horse only to have all five horses disqualified. "The agony these tracks put you through," he groans. Fellow R.T.C. Aaron King says of Foto, "If they stopped racing, he would die. He's more interested in horses than women, and he's damn interested in women." Lewis readily admits that his love of the track cost him his wife, though, to his mind, it was not necessarily a bad deal.

Foto, whose real name is Ferdinand, got his nickname years ago because of his ability to pick the winning horse in photo finishes. Then, when somebody would say one horse won and Foto knew it was the other, he would negotiate a small wager. "They call me Foto," he says, "because I know all the angles." He won't let his name be spelled "Photo" because "that sounds like I take pictures at weddings."

The other day at Bowie, Foto was in heaven when the fourth race produced a photo finish. "Dead even!" screamed Foto. "Dead heat. If you think I ain't good, watch this. It will be the difference of the dirt under my nail. If it's not called a dead heat, No. 1 wins. You'll need a magnifying glass." Indeed, the No. 1 horse won, and by the dirt under Foto's fingernail. He chortled and bragged. "Everybody in the place is hollering that No. 2 won. Not me. You heard me say No. 1." In truth, nobody had hollered that No. 2 had won. But, also in truth, nobody, save Foto, had seemed sure who had won. "Never wrong," he boasted.

It is that sort of claim that makes Foto so wonderful. His favorite words are never, always, nobody, everybody. There is hardly an indefinite word in his vocabulary. Nor is he in the least reluctant to say something with ironclad certainty and then reverse himself when a race is over. "Look at this horse in the second," says Foto. "If he don't bolt, he wins." He didn't bolt, he lost. "Told you so," says Foto. Before another race, he says, "When it's over, they'll put up 6–2. Just watch." It's over; they put up 2–6. Says Foto, "See, just what I told you." Mere facts have little to do with Foto's perception of life. Foto is never wrong. It's just that the horses, because of some demon force, don't do right.

"You're a great handicapper, Foto," says Aaron King.

"Thank you."

"But," says King, "sometimes you screw up."

Would of, could of, should of and might of are the only conditional words in a Race Track Character's lexicon. Foto looks over the entries and complains, "This race is a disgrace to the track. I'm not even gonna bet. Wanna bet I don't bet?" He bets, wins $64 and is elated. "See, I told you I knew what I was doing. I knew he could win. But why didn't I bet more?" By the time he leaves the track late in the afternoon, Foto has salvaged $3 in winnings. He's delighted. "I'm a winner," he says. "If you win $3 or $3,000, you're a winner. How many people leaving this track can say that?"

And so Foto moves on to his place of employment. He is a doorman at the Villa Nova Show Bar on Baltimore's Block. The Block is the city's attempt to isolate every vice known to man and woman in one small area. The police attitude is that if nobody gets killed on the Block, the evening is a success.

Foto has been in front of the Villa Nova for 25 years. "I've stuffed millions of people through these doors," he says. The doorman title dignifies Foto's position. In truth, he is a barker. "Come right in, sir," he says. "Might be something in there you like." Might be. The attractions are nude dancers, a lot of whom get that way very quickly; apparently so they can quit dancing and get on with more lucrative pursuits. "Come right in, sir. Most beautiful girls on the Block." And under his breath, "Damn, Sarah Fox. Who in the hell would play Sarah Fox?"

Six nights a week, at $23 per, Foto stands on the Block and judges the people passing by. "It's tough to get the Japanese in here," he says. "What they really like are dirty movies. Then you see

continued



Foto, a noted womanizer, helps fellow employees at Baltimore's Villa Nova Show Bar pick winners.


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that guy there, jiggling the quarters? He don't want to come in here. All he wants to do is go to peep shows." Foto is always polite, he prides himself on his courteousness. A woman asks if she might go in to use the rest room. "No, ma'am. I'm sorry. Please try the Midway across the street. I'm very sorry. Have a nice night." She leaves. "Damn hooker," Foto mutters. "She gets in there and steals one of our customers, and I get fired." Foto has been shot at, knives have been held at his throat, booze has been thrown on him. He has hawked for Blaze Starr and waved to Fanne Foxe. Like the horses, he loves and hates the Block. "Nobody but scum of the earth comes here now," he says. "Scalawags. I remember when girls used to wear dresses. Now. . . ." He laughs at the irony. "Funny thing, though. People love the Block. Just like me. They come here and get robbed, and it don't matter." He calls to a passer-by. "Who won the ninth at Bowie?"

From 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Foto looks for expense-account types, "the guys with the gold cards." He opens the door even when nobody wants in or out, just to get a rush of the air-conditioning. "I guess, what I am," he says as he watches the ebb and flow of humanity, "is a con man."

Indeed, it's hard to judge the malarkey quotient in Foto's chatter. He tells of growing up in Baltimore—his father was an accountant for a railroad and made a little book on the side—and of the time he ran from a cop. Foto claims he hid in a vault in a cemetery "until I got too scared by those bones in there with me." He talks of hustling pool. And, Lord, how he talks of his running ability, of how he would jump down onto the track at places like Havre de Grace and Cumberland and race the horses home from the top of the stretch—and win. Of course. "I was disappointed I never got a call. I was half expecting to hear the announcer say, 'And on the outside and closing fast is Foto.' That would have been great." He talks of being a marvelous soccer player. "I was so good," he says, without being asked, "that I would set up goals and let other guys kick in the ball so they would get the credit. I give away most of my trophies as presents." He quit school after eighth grade because "everybody knew I was smart enough to quit."

According to Foto, his first hit at the track was up to his usual high standards. He was 14, wearing short pants, and he split a $2 wager with a friend on a horse that returned $788.60. "I remember thinking," says Foto, " 'Aahhhh, so this is where it is. How sweet it is.' " He loves to play exactas; and on straight wagers he bets mostly to win, sometimes to place, never to show. "I was cured of that when I once bet $800 to show on a 1-to-9 shot that ran out of the money," Foto says. If successful, the horse would have returned about a nickel on the dollar. Why bet like that? "I thought I was stealing something."

Foto has worked in a brewery, driven cabs and installed transmissions on a GM automobile assembly line. That job ended the day Seabiscuit was running against War Admiral. "I just couldn't stand to miss that race," he says. He walked out and never returned.

After his doorman duties are finished, Foto heads for his nearby apartment to handicap the horses for the next day. He sits at his kitchen table for a couple of hours, alternately staring at an old movie on TV and scribbling his figures.

"If I told you my system, then it's not worth 30¢," he says. Which is its approximate worth anyway. When Foto finally discusses his formula, he claims it was given to him by an old clocker at Monmouth "who liked me. Everybody does. People love me." A few days after the clocker revealed his secrets, Foto swears, he won $30,000 using the system at Delaware Park. "I bought a diamond ring, a Buick convertible, a fancy TV," he says. "Within two weeks I sold my ring, sold my convertible, sold my TV." Obviously, if his system were good, Foto would be rich. In fact, he just gets by.

Over the years, is Foto a winner? "I never kept track," he says in IRS tones. Still, people at the track constantly stop to ask, "What do your figures show, Foto?" He tells all, though he grouses, "I don't know why I should make all these people rich. I introduced one guy to my figures, and he bought two service stations."

Foto relies on the two most esoteric entries in the past-performance lines of the *Daily Racing Form*—the speed rating of the horse and the track variant. The *Racing Form* uses a complex system to reach both numbers. They mean everything to some horseplayers, nothing to others. Foto swears by them. By consulting those numbers on each horse's last three races, he calculates which entry looks like a winner. "If I just bet my figures," says Foto, "I'd be rich." Would he like to be rich? "Naw, I'd just like to have money."

The problem is that not only are others skeptical of his numbers, but Foto is, too. Sometimes he bets his numbers, but often he makes adjustments—frequently to his sorrow. That is another aspect of the Race Track Character. He has a system he swears by. He touts his friends on his selections. He bigmouths all over the grandstand. Then, on the way to the window, he'll hear somebody say he has a tip on another horse and the R.T.C. will bet the tip. And—too often—lose. A horse named Tulle Tu doesn't add up in Foto's figures, but he has a tip. He touts his friends onto Tulle Tu, he plays the horse himself. Tulle Tu loses. "Tips, Goddamn tips," Foto moans. "All my life I go for these tips. What's wrong with me? Am I a dummy? I make my friends lose money, and this horse that wins goes out and runs like Secretariat."

He looks at another race. "O.K., Poolside will win from here to Georgia. Forget the four horse. She'll stop." Poolside is eighth; the No. 4 horse wins. But Foto has a few dollars on No. 4, too. Why? "Well, you gotta figure." Foto bets a 3-5-6 triple, the finish is 3-6-5 and pays $149.40. "That's O.K.," says Foto. "I ain't never gonna be broke. I have $10 worth of nickels and $14 worth of dimes stashed away at home."

His handicapping is repeatedly interrupted by a 4-year-old boy who comes to the track every day with his grandmother.

"Where's your ice cream?" says Foto, absently.

"I don't got none."

"Come on, Tim, you gotta talk right. Say, 'I don't have none.' "

"I don't have none."

Abruptly, Foto slaps his *Racing Form* against his head. "Here it is. The clue on Sarah Fox. Right here. She was the only 4-year-old in the race. The others are all 3-year-olds. A four beats a three almost every time. How could I have missed that? Normally I would have had a deuce on her. Why didn't I this time? That's what makes this game so baffling. Maybe the secret is to throw the class out and bet the bums." **END**

by Bill Colson

An ongoing fungoer

California Coach Jimmie Reese is the oldest and best fungo hitter around



Reese's homemade bat keeps pitchers hopping

Ryan or Guidry? Rice or Parker? One of the axioms of baseball is that fans—and insiders,too—will forever argue over who is best at a particular skill. Best hitter, best pitcher, best peanut vendor. No claim of superiority is beyond dispute. Well, almost none. The sole exceptions are the superlatives bestowed on Jimmie Reese, a spry 74-year-old coach for the California Angels. Reese oot only is the oldest man in a major league uniform, but he is also the world's greatest fungo hitter. There can be no debate on either point.

For the information of fans who never arrive at a game before the national anthem, fungoes are the balls a coach hits to fielders during pregame drills. The derivation of the term "fungo" is somewhat obscure. According to ooe explanation, it comes from an old game in which the hitter would yell, "One go, two go, fungoes." Whatever the source, White Sox Coach Bobby Winkles says that wheo it comes to fungoes, "Jimmie Reese is No. 1 and the rest of us are eighth, ninth and 10th." Minnesota Manager Gene Mauch adds, "He's got a swing any tournament golf pro would envy."

Mauch's praise helps explain how Reese once shot an 82 for 18 boles using only a fungo bat and a putter. In 1968, while coaching Seattle in the minors, Reese beat a golf pro in a test of accuracy. Standing at home plate, he stroked four out of 15 baseballs into a circle in centerfield with bis bat, while tbe golfer dropped in two golf balls with a nine iron.

In another esoteric test, Reese won a bet from current Pirate skipper Chuck Tanner, when Tanner was the Seattle Rainiers' manager, by hitting a flagpole from 100 feet away on his first swing. But Reese's fungo skills have not always been employed so frivolously. Until 1972 he "pitched" batting practice in the minors with a fungo bat—and without a protective screen. "He hit strikes with 90% accuracy," says Cleveland Second Baseman Duane Kuiper. "That's better than most pitchers." Reese's mound career eoded prematurely after a line drive whistled dangerously close to his head. "If that ball had hit me," recalls Reese with a shudder, "it would have sent me to the great beyond."

Reese broke into baseball in 1917 as a bat boy, a clear indication of destiny's call. The highlights of his playing career came as a Yankee rookie in 1930 when he hit .346 in 188 at bats and roomed with Babe Ruth. "I probably roomed with his bed more than with Babe," recalls Reese. "He had one of those unusual constitutions. He could stay up all night and still hit a ball 500 feet."

Since retiring as a player in 1938, Reese has banged out some two million short hoppers, towering pop-ups, long flies and sinking line drives—most of them with bats he makes in his workshop at home. That's right, Jimmie Reese, the game's premier fungo hitter, doeso't use a store-bought fungo bat. A wood-carver in his spare time, he fashions his own by splitting a regular bat through the middle with a band saw. "Tan oak doesn't crack or split as easily as the asb or poplar they use in the fungo bats today," explains Reese, "and mine is heavier. Normal fungo bats are 16 to 25 ounces; mine is 27 and has greater balance." Reese hits the ball with the rounded side and uses the flat surface to scoop up balls as the fielders throw them in to him. "Not having to bend down to pick up those balls has added two or three years to my career," he says. He also pops 80 vitamin pills daily and never lights the cigars he chomps.

For the most part, Reese has used the same fungo bat the last nine years, unlike other coaches, who go through at least three or four a seasoo. But this one is not really his favorite. He almost lost that bat in 1967 wheo he made the mistake of lending it to a young player. Without Reese's knowledge, the player took the bat into the batting cage and—*oh no!*—broke it. Because of their light weight, fungo bats are easy to swing and control, but they cannot withstand the impact of a major league fastball. Reese was able to put the broken bat back together, and now he keeps it under lock and key.

Those coaches who aren't as particular as Reese obtain their fungo bats from the Hillerich and Bradsby Co. Some models are shaped like a slimmed-down version of a regular bat, others resemble a broomstick or have a thin handle with a bottle barrel.

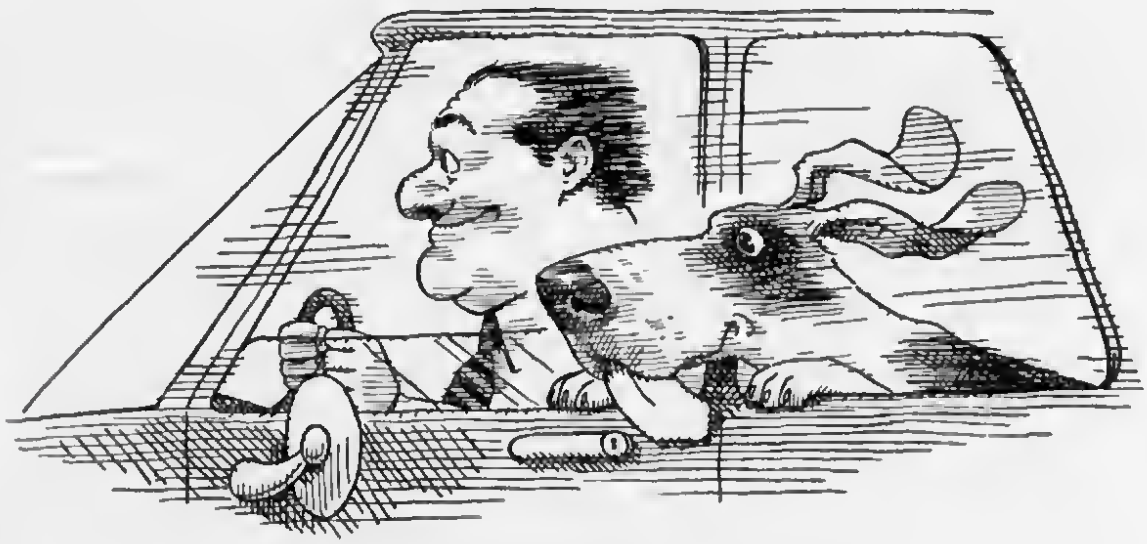
For the past seven seasons Reese's fungo duties have been restricted largely to conditioning the Angel pitchers. Ratber thao make them suffer through monotonous wind sprints, as is the custom, Reese runs them backward, forward and to the side as be bangs out balls.

"Jimmie can stretch you out so that the ball just hits your glove," says Nolan Ryan, who named bis second son Reese. "We've never been in better shape, and

continued

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he's such a great man that our morale has been tremendous."

Watching Reese practice his craft is like attending a clinic. "If I want to hit grounders, I hit the ball while it's between my waist and knees," he says. "If I want to pop one straight up for a catcher to work on foul flies—and that's the toughest fungo to hit—I have to throw the ball over my head and come under it. And if I'm hitting flies to the outfielders, the ball is only slightly above my head so I can get distance. If you want line drives, it's out to the side so that you can strike it good."

Because Reese only hits to the pitchers, probably the best all-purpose fungo hitters today are Bobby Knoop, another Angel coach, and Dave Garcia, the manager of the Indians. "During spring training, I keep extending the fielders gradually so that they begin to realize how far they really can go," says Garcia. "But before a game I never try to cross up the infielder. I try to make him look good, give him a ball he can handle."

Like playing the oboe, fungo hitting is a difficult art, and not every coach masters it. The Yankees' Yogi Berra, for example, readily admits he's inept. He considers it a chore just to get the ball in the vicinity of the fielder, so he doesn't worry about such subtleties as speed and spin. "Yogi really is bad," confirms Yankee broadcaster and former teammate Phil Rizzuto. "He's broken his finger twice hitting fungoes."

Pitchers traditionally have been the best at hitting fly balls with fungo bats, probably because it gives them a chance to accomplish in practice what they can seldom do in a game: smash the ball a long way. As a result, they are the leading experts at busting balls over fences or into the stratosphere, altogether useless skills that Reese considers bastardizations of the art.

When it comes to muscle flexing, few players can jerk a ball as far or as high as journeymen relievers Joe Hoerner, who played from 1963 to 1975, and Ed Roebuck (1955-66). Both hit tape-measure shots in numerous parks, but they are best remembered for reaching the highest part of the Astrodome roof, the ultimate test in power fungo hitting.

When fungo hitters visit Houston they invariably try to reach the roof. Most fail. The only current player who can drive a fungo that high with any regularity is San Diego Reliever Rollie Fingers.

The fungo may have been as important in determining the height of the Astrodome as the calculations of any engineer. Roebuck recalls that during spring training in 1963 the late Dodger owner, Walter O'Malley, approached him early one morning with a challenge: Could Roebuck hit a fungo 200 feet straight up in the air? O'Malley wanted the information to assist in the design of the Dome. Certainly the pitcher was a logical choice for the experiment because he had once hit a ball out of the Los Angeles Coliseum, a prodigious shot that cost him a $75 fine. Roebuck told O'Malley he was up to the task, so that afternoon he and O'Malley took the field with a fungo, a bag of balls and various measuring devices. The rest is architectural history.

"Mr. O'Malley never told me how high the balls went," says Roebuck, "but they must've been close to 200 feet because a few days later, while I was sitting in the bullpen during a game, a bat boy delivered a sack stuffed with $75 in quarters." And, sure enough, the design for the Astrodome called for the roof to be 208 feet above the field at its highest point. Though the roof remains a favorite target of fun-loving fungoers, it has never been hit during a game.

For all its importance, fungo hitting remains an unappreciated phase of baseball. This circumstance is no doubt attributable to its tarnished reputation. The 1886 edition of *Art of Batting* warned ominously, "There's no worse habit for batsmen to indulge in than batting 'fungo' balls."

But there is no better habit for coaches who want to hone a player's defensive skills or whip him into shape.

THE WEEK

(August 12-18)

by JIM KAPLAN

NL EAST When the Cubs (5–2) lost 8–2 to San Francisco, the *Chicago Sun-Times* ran the headline: CUBS SURRENDER MEEKLY TO GIANTS. The Cubs were not amused. After beating the Giants 6–5 on a seventh-inning homer, Bill Buckner refused to speak with the press, silently pointing to a sign above his locker that read NO PRESS ALLOWED AFTER AUG. 15. WE ALL DIED YESTEROAY. Actually, the Cubs were very much alive. They went on to pound the Giants 14–4, prompting the *Sun-Times* to print a revisionist headline: GIANTS SURRENDER MEEKLY TO CUBS. Whereupon the Cubs began speaking to reporters.

There was plenty to talk about: Bruce Sutter's three saves, which lifted his major league-leading total to 30; Steve Dillard's 11-game hitting streak and .365 average; and the five wins that were fashioned with rallies after the sixth inning.

Pittsburgh (4–2) was making plenty of noise, too. "There's no chance anyone can catch Pittsburgh," said San Diego Manager Roger Craig after the Pirates beat the Padres 5–4 for their sixth straight win and the 17th in their last 23 games. "They get the key hits and make the key outs. They're making their own luck." Four different starters got wins—Bert Blyleven, Jim Bibby, John Candelaria and Bruce Kison—and Catcher Ed Ott had a .556 week. Pittsburgh was so impressive it won praise even when it lost. The Dodgers' Jerry Reuss, a former Pirate, beat the Bucs 5–1 and then said, "They're the best team in the league. That's not taking anything away from Houston, but who would you rather pitch to, Houston or Pittsburgh?"

Righthanders would rather pitch to Montreal (3–2). In losses to Astro righthanders J. R. Richard and Joaquin Andujar, the Expos had only nine hits and two runs. In fact, Montreal failed to score more than three runs in any game but still escaped with a winning week because Dan Schatzeder and Scott Sanderson two-hit the Astros, David Palmer six-hit the Braves, and Steve Rogers five-hit Atlanta.

When St. Louis (3–4) rookie John Fulgham was knocked out by an errant throw in pregame practice, Trainer Gene Gieselmann revived him and said, "Now go out and throw a no-hitter." As literal-minded as any rookie, Fulgham tried to comply, pitching a perfect game for 5⅓ innings and beating the Giants 3–0 on two hits.

Speaking at a Cincinnati baseball luncheon, Danny Ozark, Philadelphia's beleaguered manager, asked for written questions from the audience. "I wish you'd write these on white paper," Ozark said. "Anytime I see a pink slip, I think I'm fired." Ozark's outlook improved considerably after Nino Espinosa beat the Reds 3–2 on five hits, Randy Lerch defeated the Astros 5–2 on seven, and Greg Gross tripled to edge the Astros 1–0. The Mets (3–2) beat the Braves 18–5, 6–3 and 6–3, to take a 7–1 edge in the clubs' season's series and prove themselves the better of the league's two last-place teams.

PITT 70–51 MONT 66–51 CHI 65–54
ST.L 62–58 PHIL 63–59 NY 50–68

NL WEST With George Foster and Joe Morgan slumping, and Ken Griffey lost for the season, Cincinnati Manager John McNamara had to go into his famous juggling act. McNamara batted Hector Cruz fourth and Dave Collins third.

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and they helped Tom Seaver win his ninth straight, 9–2 over San Diego. Then the Reds (4–2) won three of five one-run games against New York and Philadelphia as Dave Concepcion and Cesar Geronimo delivered game-winning hits in the ninth and eighth innings, respectively, and Vic Correll got another gamer in the 10th. Cincinnati has won 17 of its last 24.

Houston is hurting. The Astros (2–4) have batted .286 since the All-Star break, compared with a season-long .255, but they have won only 16 of their last 30. The ultimate in frustration came against Philadelphia: the Astros pounded out 10 hits but left seven men on base and lost 1–0. Earlier, Houston had ended an embarrassing streak of 25 games when Pitcher Joaquin Andujar hit an inside-the-park home run to beat Montreal 2–1. It was the first homer by an Astro in the Dome since July 15.

The bottom dropped out for San Diego, which lost six of seven and fell into fifth. But that wasn't the worst of it. Owner Ray Kroc put his foot in his mouth again when he expressed interest in potential free agents Joe Morgan and Graig Nettles of the Yankees. The indiscretion brought an accusation of tampering from New York owner George Steinbrenner. After a meek apology, Kroc disqualified his team from bidding for either player and pledged to spend up to $10 million rebuilding his team.

San Francisco lost four of six and any pretense of harmony. Outfielder Bill North implied that his teammates were losers, Pitcher Ed Halicki complained that he should be starting instead of relieving, and several writers covering the club strongly suggested that Manager Joe Altobelli should be fired. The Giants fell into fourth behind Los Angeles (5–1), which has won 21 of 29. The latest Dodger heroes were a local boy, Babo Castillo, who made good by winning one game and saving another; veteran Burt Hooton, who two-hit the Cardinals 9–0 with his new one-finger curve; and Gary Thomasson, who took advantage of a rare chance to play in the outfield by homering three times.

The only Atlanta (1–5) hero was Phil Niekro, who threw his 200th career complete game and beat Houston 3–2.

HOUS 70–53 CIN 68–56 LA 57–65
SF 57–66 SD 53–71 ATL 47–78

AL WEST

Rob Wilfong's three-run homer, the first by a Twin in 10 games, gave Minnesota a 5–2 win over New York. Wilfong's loud bat—he hit .417 for the week—was a lonesome one. Roy Smalley has hit .200 since the All-Star break, and Ron Jackson has not had a game-winning RBI all season. All of this might be disastrous for another pennant contender, except that Minnesota plays in baseball's weakest division. The Twins (3–4) have a .500 record since the break, but they have nonetheless gained two games on first-place California. Typifying Minnesota's good luck last week was a pair of wins by Jerry Koosman, who beat the A's 1–0 and the Yankees 5–2 while yielding 10 hits in each game. For the first time in his career Koosman is giving up more hits (200) than innings pitched (192), but his record is 15–10.

The Angels (2–4) began gearing up for September. Nolan Ryan pitched for the first time since injuring his elbow on July 25 and beat the Blue Jays 7–5. Two other ailing pitchers, Chris Knapp and Frank Tanana, are expected to be available soon. Another likely September threat is Kansas City (3–4), whose rookie pitcher, Craig Chamberlain, beat Detroit and Baltimore by 7–1 scores in his first major league starts.

Texas lost six of seven, but drew its harshest criticism for needlessly acquiring a lefthanded first baseman, Willie Montanez, from the Mets. "Can Montanez pitch?" snapped Outfielder Richie Zisk, referring to the three first basemen already on the Texas roster and the pitching staff's 3.98 ERA. Added ex-Ranger Oscar Gamble, now of the Yanks, "If they'd just get a team and let them play, they'd be better off. They have a lot of talent, enough to win the division for sure. But they ought to let the guys get to know each other for three or four years. They ought to let the talent gel."

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

FRED LYNN: The Red Sox centerfielder batted .600, homered five times and drove in 13 runs. He leads the American League in hitting (.346) and homers (36) and trails only California's Don Baylor in RBIs (107–104).

After defeating the Orioles 7–0, Chicago rookie Steve (Rainbow) Trout was so happy he leaped into the arms of Catcher Milt May. Chicago (3–5) got its other two wins from another rookie, Ross Baumgarten, who beat Toronto and Boston and kept his composure. Lamar Johnson extended his hitting streak to 19 games.

Rick Langford of Oakland (3–3) defeated the Indians 4–1 on three hits in his fifth straight complete game. Seattle star Bruce Bochte was wondering again if his teammates would fold in the stretch. When he expressed similar feelings in 1978, Manager Darrell Johnson called him a "big mouth." This time—as the Mariners lost five of six for the week and eight of their last 10—Johnson seemed to agree with Bochte as he called a team meeting to discuss the club's poor play. If Seattle eventually does fold, of course, hardly anyone will notice.

CAL 68–55 MINN 64–57 KC 63–59 TEX 61–62
CHI 54–68 SEA 50–73 OAK 38–85

AL EAST

On the surface, all was well in Boston (5–1). The Red Sox have baseball's two hottest players in Dennis Eckersley, who beat Minnesota 12–1 to win his eighth straight start, and Fred Lynn, whose hitting figured in all five victories. But storm clouds were gathering over Back Bay. Catcher Carlton Fisk reinjured his right elbow, sidelining himself indefinitely, and the staff earned run average, excluding Eckersley, has been 4.83 since the All-Star break. With second basemen Jerry Remy and Jack Brohamer both injured, the Red Sox hurriedly acquired Ted Sizemore from the Cubs, and he promptly provided some welcome sunshine, going 3 for 3 and spearheading an 8–2 win over the White Sox in his debut.

The Orioles (3–3) collected only 19 hits in their first five games but twice beat Chicago 2–1 in the 12th inning. One victory came on Al Bumbry's single, the other as the result of a play called "32 trap," in which base runner Doug DeCinces deliberately allowed himself to be spotted wandering between first and second while Eddie Murray was at third. When White Sox Pitcher Guy Hoffman turned to pick off DeCinces, Murray raced home to score. Even so, Manager Earl Weaver was displeased. "We could use a visit from Dr. Long Ball," he said. The next day the doctor delivered 14 hits—five for extra bases—and the Orioles whipped Kansas City 9–2.

Even as reports surfaced that the concrete was deteriorating in Yankee Stadium, New York (4–2) was abuilding. Bobby Murcer slugged three homers; Reggie Jackson, who has never finished a season with a batting average of more than .300, edged up to .306, and Oscar Gamble beat his old Texas teammates by singling twice, homering and throwing out former Yankee Mickey Rivers at the plate.

"We need a new manager," said Pitcher Tom Buskey of the Blue Jays. "Roy Hartsfield doesn't know how to handle a pitching staff." Buskey's timing could not have been worse. The Blue Jays (4–3) had their second winning week of the season as Hartsfield got victories from two rookies he inserted into the pitching rotation. Butch Edge won his major league debut, 4–2 over the A's, and Dave Stieb beat the Angels 6–5.

Resurgent Cleveland (3–3) kept rolling behind leadoff man Mike Hargrove, who batted .409 and homered four times, and Rick Wise (13–7), who shut out Seattle on five hits.

Detroit and Milwaukee each won five of six, though they did it by different means. Led by Pitcher Jack Morris, who won twice, and Jason Thompson, who homered thrice, the Tigers triumphed with relative ease. The Brewers, however, were down to their last out two games in a row against Kansas City before pulling out victories on Ben Oglivie's homer and Gorman Thomas' bases-loaded walk.

BALT 79–41 BOS 75–45 MIL 72–51 NY 65–55
DET 64–58 CLEV 61–61 TOR 39–83

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In the chips at Saratoga

General Assembly made another splash at his favorite track, taking the Travers

Next to the *Daily Racing Form* listing of five of the seven starters in last Saturday's Travers Stakes at Saratoga was an asterisk indicating that those horses could handle a muddy track. The other two had no mud mark. When rain drenched the track, making the going difficult and tiring, bettors gave those marks and those non-marks considerable thought. They could have saved themselves the effort. One of the two without a mark was General Assembly, an enigmatic critter who went out and won the 110th Travers by 15 splashy lengths.

The General has led a puzzling racing life, up one day and down the next. Racing fans adore him after one race and deride him after the next. Until last week's Travers he was known primarily as "Secretariat's best son," but that has meant very little because Secretariat has been anything but the sire he was expected to be when he was sent to stud after his stunning two years as a runner. Well, what General Assembly did in the Travers was stunning and more. He ran over a track rated "sloppy" in 2:00 for the 1¼ miles to set not only a stakes record but a track record as well, and Saratoga is the oldest track in the U.S., having opened its iron gates 116 years ago.

The field the General left in his wake was the best group of 3-year-olds assembled since the Kentucky Derby. Not since Secretariat himself won the 1973 Belmont Stakes by 31 lengths has there been so overwhelming a triumph in a race of such high significance. But a question remains, one as simple as an old racing adage: Is General Assembly just a horse for a course?

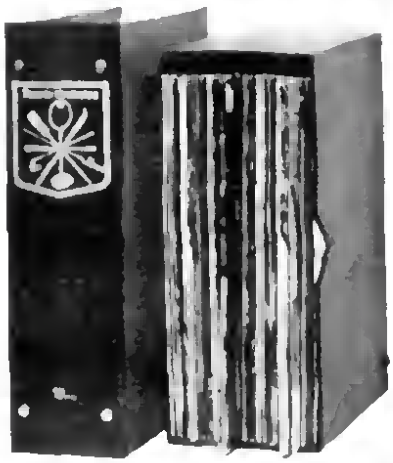
The horse obviously thrives at Saratoga. He has run four races there and won them all. Elsewhere he has been victorious only twice in 11 starts. This spring General Assembly ran in every leg of the Triple Crown, finishing second, fifth and seventh, respectively, and in the Belmont he was but a blur in the distance behind Coastal.

Moments after the Travers, LeRoy Jolley, the General's trainer, had a self-aggrandizing flight of fancy. "There has been some talk about making the Saratoga meeting longer," he said. "As far as General Assembly is concerned, they should make it a year-round meeting." Forget the absence of a mud mark. The General's performances show that he

continued



En route to making it four for four at Saratoga, the 3-year-old son of Secretariat, Jacinto Vasquez up, hits the stretch handsomely ahead



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likes an off track. In 1978 he came to prominence by winning the six-furlong Saratoga Special in 1:09, the quickest time for that race in 73 years. The track that day was listed as only "good." General Assembly's second-place finish behind Spectacular Bid in the Derby was over a wet but fast track.

After his poor showing in the Belmont five weeks later, the General was rested and walked slowly each day, the strain of the Triple Crown had taken its toll. He didn't compete again until two weeks before the Travers, winning a seven-furlong race at Saratoga as he pleased. Until recently, General Assembly showed signs of nervousness in the paddock before races and while walking in post parades. In his prep for the Travers and in the Travers itself he seemed much calmer. "Maybe the toughness of the Triple Crown races matured him, got him to the point where he learned to relax," said Jolley. "In his two races at Saratoga he was much more confident of himself, and I would have to say that is the big difference in him."

In September 3-year-olds begin running against older horses in handicap races. Many assume that the Triple Crown events decide which horse is the best of its generation, but that's not always the case. If a colt sweeps the Triple he is automatically the champion, of course, but in other years the late-summer and fall stars have at times determined the champ.

As recently as 1975 Wajima was the 3-year-old champion, even though he didn't compete in a single Triple Crown race. Key to the Mint was named the top 3-year-old of 1972, the year Riva Ridge won two-thirds of the Triple, and in 1966 Buckpasser was tops in his crop despite the fact that he was a no-show at Churchill Downs and the other Triple Crown courses. All three horses had one thing in common: a victory in the Travers that catapulted them into contention for 3-year-old honors.

This year there was some discouraging news before the Travers. Spectacular Bid, behind in his training after stepping on a safety pin the day he failed to complete the Triple Crown at Belmont Park, would not run, nor would Coastal, the Belmont winner, who was being rested for the fall campaign. Moreover, Valdez, the highly touted West Coast colt, was scratched because of the sloppy going. Smarten, the winner of six straight stakes on six different tracks, was in, as were Steady Growth, Canada's top 3-year-old; Screen King, who had run reasonably well in the Triple Crown races; and Private Account, a late developer. That Davona Dale, Calumet Farm's top filly, who had beaten the best of her generation in eight stakes, was also entered gave the Travers a touch of novelty. Although Davona Dale was beaten by It's In The Air the week before in the Alabama at Saratoga, trainer John Veitch decided to give her a shot at the colts.

The fans liked her chances, sending her off as the 5-to-2 favorite. Once the starting gate opened, though, General Assembly, with Jacinto Vasquez up, was moving fastest. He had drawn the inside post position and swooped inside long shot King Green en route to a commanding lead down the backstretch. Davona Dale made one spirited move at the leaders, but she couldn't sustain it or even come close to menacing the General. At the top of the stretch Smarten made a little run, but it was inadequate and General Assembly just kept striding away to his smashing victory. It was not only the fastest 1¼ miles but also the richest race ($134,750) ever run at Saratoga.

When the time of 2:00 was flashed on the tote board the crowd was abuzz; the track had been getting slower with each race as rain continued to fall. That kind of speed on that kind of track is unheard of. The previous record had been set in 1976 by another Jolley-trained colt, Honest Pleasure, over a strip that was lightning fast.

Davona Dale finished fourth behind the General, Smarten and Private Account, and she looked like a very tired horse, one due for a long rest.

Veitch says Davona Dale will return to her own division in the Sept. 29 Ruffian Stakes at Belmont. "The jockey [Jorge Velasquez] said she never got hold of the track," Veitch said after the Travers. "When she finally got to run at the top of the stretch, it was too late."

On Sept. 8, General Assembly will go for another big one. He will be facing the 1978 Triple Crown winner, Affirmed, Spectacular Bid, Coastal and other stalwarts in the Marlboro Cup at Belmont. Belmont is not Saratoga. What the General must prove now is that he doesn't have to carry his own racetrack with him to win. If he can do that, he might just wind up as 3-year-old of the year. **END**

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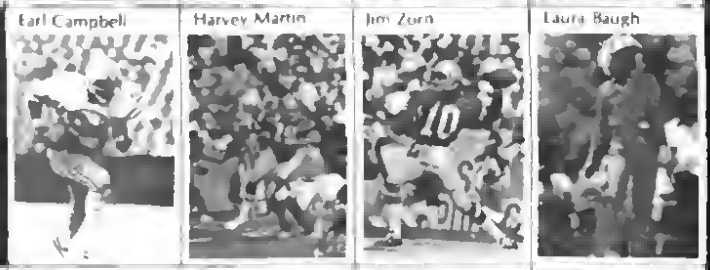
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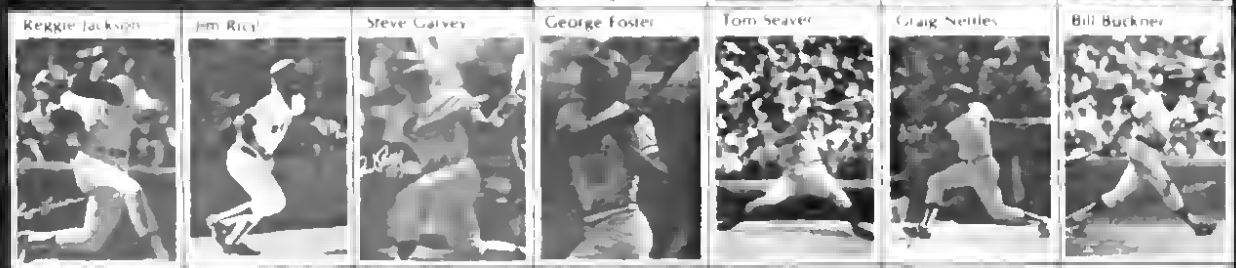


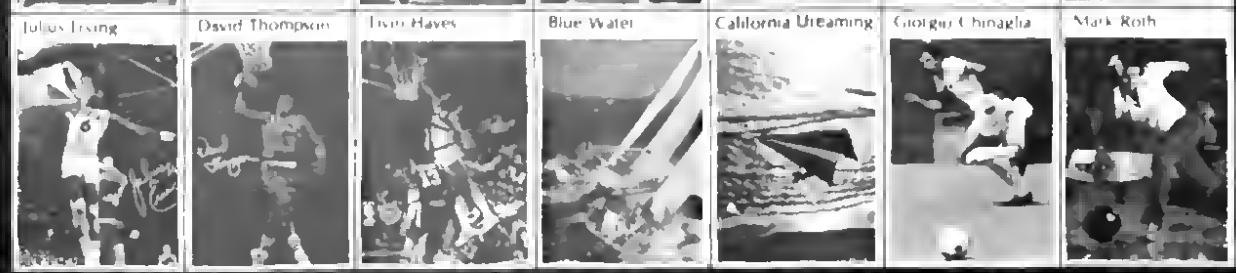
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GOOD FLICK ON BAD DOINGS IN THE PROS

I suppose it is against all the rules to review a movie's advertising campaign, but in the case of *North Dallas Forty* the advertisements are so blatantly misleading and do such a disservice to the film that it's important to set the record straight. You may have seen these ads in the newspapers. They show two foolish football players stuffed into a pair of outsized, cleated cowboy boots; while one of them douses himself with booze, a couple of wild-and-wicked women grab at the players. "Wait till you see the weird part" is the come-on slogan.

Let us pray that Paramount Pictures doesn't plan to bring out the life story of General Idi Amin, lest its advertising intelligentsia bill the film as a "laff-riot." Having made a very serious sports movie, it's apparent that Paramount lost the courage of its convictions. Will Americans go see a "serious" movie about sports? Probably not, unless a handsome athlete is dying slowly of a mysterious disease. So, push *North Dallas Forty* as giddy, maybe even kinky—an adult version of *Meatballs* for the Celebrity-Superstars fan mentality. Indeed, though the movie occasionally does pander to raunchiness, the main thrust of *North Dallas Forty* is to indict the National Football League as an evil institution on the nether side of civilization.

In this portrayal, the team owners cheat the players, the coaches abuse them, and the players themselves are cretins and junkies who venture onto the gridiron thanks only to pills and needles ("better football through chemistry"). Is this fair? Well, on the one hand, consider the source. Any film that would advertise in such a dishonest manner presumably would not quail at rewriting a little thing like the truth. Keep in mind that *The Deer Hunter* Russian-roulette scenes were total fabrication, and that dishonesty's reward was the film industry's highest honor, the Academy Award for best picture of the year. So, who do you believe: Hollywood or the NFL's surgeon general?

Ah, but on the other hand, *North Dallas Forty* is based on the novel by Peter Gent, who played five seasons for the Cowboys and receives partial credit for the screenplay, and there are 19 NFL players in the cast, who appear to be believers in the film. Jeff Severson, formerly of the Cardinals, says that *North Dallas Forty* has "the authenticity of a newsreel"; John Matuszak of the Raiders (*above, at far right*), who plays a major supporting role with considerable ability, endorses the movie as "the most honest film about players, particularly about the pain they must endure." Furthermore, two experts on the film's technical staff were Tom Fears, the superscout who has been an NFL head coach, and Frank O'Neill, one of the country's foremost physical therapists. Have all these Judases sold out pro football for a payday? Hard to believe.

If *North Dallas Forty* is reasonably accurate, the pro game is a gruesome human abattoir, worse even than previously imagined. Much of the strength of this impression can be attributed to Nick Nolte (*above, left*), who plays the hero—an aging, chain-smoking, misshapen, limping wide receiver—with the force and understanding that Sylvester Stallone invested in his Rocky Balboa. Unfortunately, Nolte's character, Phil Elliott, is often fuzzily drawn, which makes the actor's accomplishment all the more impressive.

The film is flawed in other ways, too—right to its title. There is never any explanation of what the "forty" refers to. (Isn't there some obligation to have a title mean something?) And much else is too obvious—and often belabored. The team owners are rich-Texan cartoon characters. The coach, who wears a Tom Landry hat, is all computer-man. The quarterback, played by singer Mac Davis (*center in right photo, with actor Bo Svenson*) in his acting debut, provides a good counterpoint as Elliott's bosom buddy, but he scrambles for too many wisecracks. For that matter, the film's bawdy beginning—which is ruthlessly, endlessly dedicated to proving that 1) football players sure are huge, fun-lovin' fellas, and 2) we are in that Hollywood theme park, Texasworld—keeps the train in the station for a long time.

Things get rolling, however, whenever director Ted Kotcheff finds the confidence to put the clichés on waivers and play Nolte. What emerges is a brutal portrait of what Gent perceives to be a mean American business. END

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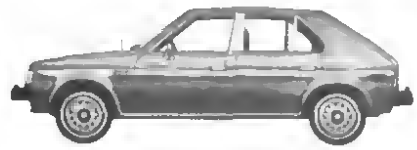
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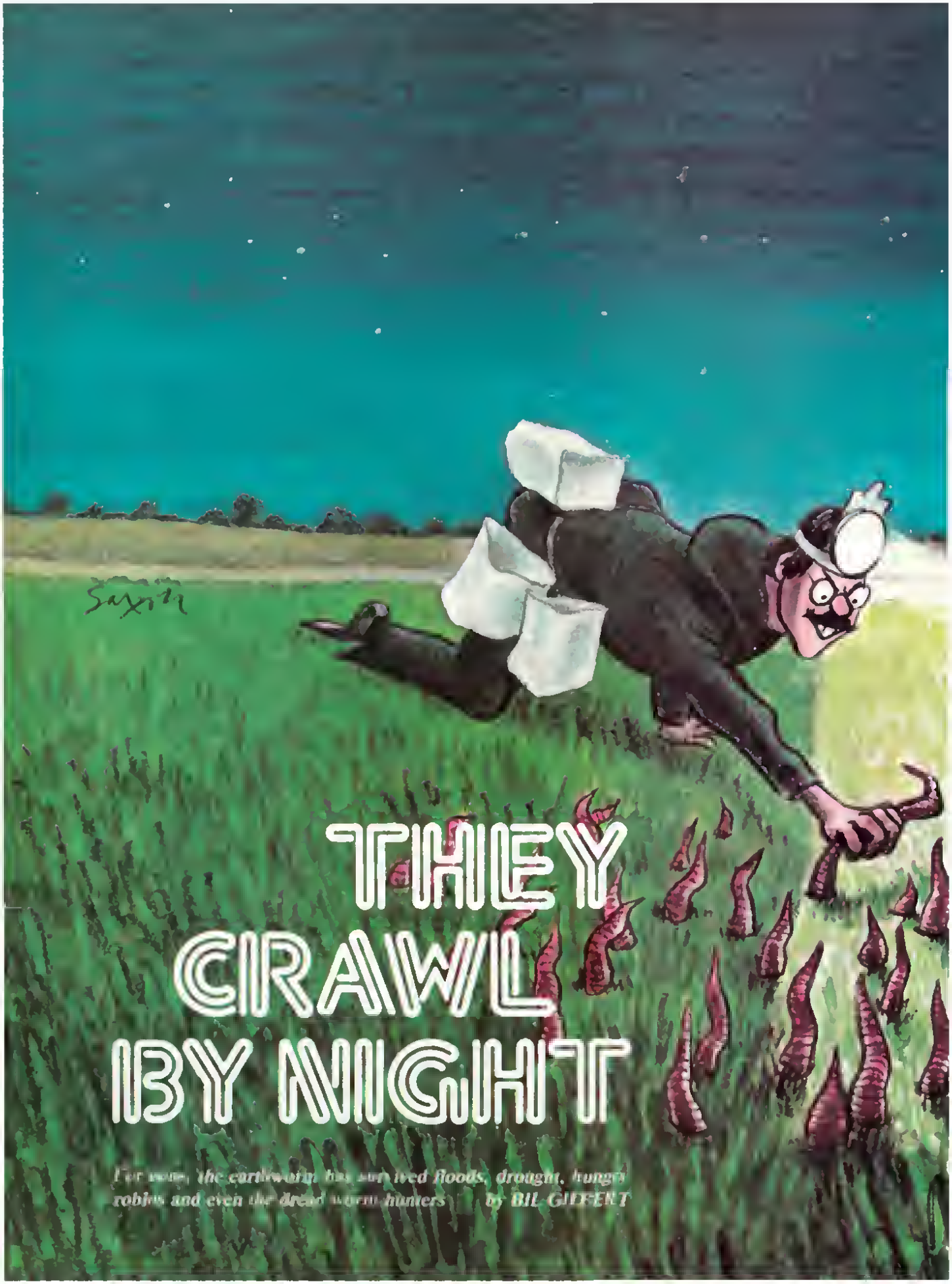
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THEY CRAWL BY NIGHT

For years, the earthworm has survived floods, drought, hungry robins and even the dread worm hunters

by BIL GILBERT



WORMS

continued



Charles Darwin spent 40 long years peering at the lowly earthworm.

Aristotle, who so often got here fastest if not necessarily with the bestest natural history observations, called them the "intestines of the earth." Some years later my grandfather and a good many other people in southern Michigan, where I grew up, called them fishbaits, as in "Bil, slip over to the golf course after dark and get me a can of fishbaits. I want to be on the lake for the bass by sunrise."

Aristotle and my grandfather were talking about the same creature, one which through the centuries has intrigued the scientist, befriended the farmer, been the good if unwilling companion of the sport, repelled the squeamish zoology student assigned to pick apart its pickled corpse and is now the essential raw material of a growing industry. This would be *Lumbricus*, a.k.a. the earthworm.

Commonly and unthinkingly it is spoken of as the lowly earthworm. Only if used in a geographical sense (as we do polar bear or sea anemone—to associate a beast with its traditional habitat) is this a sensible name. *Lumbricus* does live below most of us. However, if we use the word lowly patronizingly, we are guilty of indefensible hubris. Quantitatively (which is perhaps the only objective measure of biological success), earthworms outnumber us by countless billions. Qualitatively, good arguments can be made that earthworms are more important cogs in the planetary machine than are earth persons. Darwin, in addition to considering such matters as the origin of species, spent more than 40 years peering down at and thinking about the lowly earthworm. Eventually he gave us a volume with a title appropriate to such a lengthy study, *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, Through the Action of Worms, with Observations on Their Habits*. Darwin concluded that he could think of few other creatures (and he conspicuously did not think of us) "which have played so important a part in the history of the world."

Mankind in its entirety could shuffle off this mortal coil and it would be a matter of minor significance for the rest of the biotic community. In some quarters, in fact, it might be regarded as good riddance to bad rubbish. But if earthworms were to disappear, severe dislocations of most life systems would occur and complicated adjustments would have to be made—if they could be. However, not to worry. *Lumbricus* was here before we were and in all probability will outlast us, being much better dug in, so to speak. Fishbait they may be, but keep in mind who it is that is known as worm bait.

These worms belong to a large and cosmopolitan phylum of beasts called annelids, which are lumped together taxonomically by reason of being segmented, soft-bodied invertebrates. Worms squirm about from the polar caps to the depths of the oceans. Some look like flowers or feathers; some have barbs and poisons, some are sea mice and leeches; all are only a few evolutionary steps removed from spiders, centipedes and that sort of thing. Among them are some 200 members of the lumbricid, or earthworm, family: dampish, elongated, elas-



Some worms look like flowers and feathers; some are sea mice and leeches.

tic beings that operate terrestrially on a transcontinental scale. They include red worms, green worms, brown-nosed worms, dung worms, slime worms, stinking worms, giant worms (an Australian species with python pretensions grows to a length of almost 10 feet) and many others most of us never will—and might not care to—meet. However, there is one we do encounter regularly and have come to think of as The Worm. This is *Lumbricus terrestris*, sometimes called the beavertail, the dew worm or, most commonly, the nightcrawler. It is the classic fishbait—although other species, notably the red worm, often serve instead.

That most of our earthworm experience and lore is based on our acquaintance with nightcrawlers is appropriate and probably fortunate. With no disrespect intended toward other annelids, the nightcrawler may be the most interesting and attractive of the lot. It is as useful, valuable, orderly, successful, pacific and dignified a wild animal as any roaming this land. "The nightcrawler is THE KING of worms," says Ray Edwards of St. Charles, Ill., a fishbait entrepreneur, a perceptive and indefatigable fishbait student, and probably the most enthusiastic fishbait admirer we now have. (More of the observations and opinions of Ray Edwards will follow.)

Functionally, the nightcrawler is a hollow tube of about 150 segments. One end is a head, the first 36 segments containing mouth, crop, gizzard, several hearts and, despite all the snide remarks about lowliness, not a bad brain. Tested in laboratory experiments, fishbaits learn and remember maze problems. In the field they are good at turning and manipulating a small object, say a leaf or stick, so as to fit it into their tunnels. They react to and seem to interpret vibrations, and they scent trails made by others of their kind. They have a well-developed sense of taste, preferring, for example, carrot leaves to celery but choosing celery over cabbage.

The rear 100 or so segments are mostly gut casing and, in a sense, are disposable; that is, if they are lost or damaged, they can be regrown. Up to 10 of the front-end segments can be regenerated, too. Anyone with a perverse desire to do in a nightcrawler must therefore aim for an area between the 11th and 36th segments. A fishbait is finished if crushed or severed in this vital region.

We have perhaps reached the stage of social enlightenment in which it can be publicly mentioned that earthworms are hermaphrodites. Each individual has both male and female reproductive organs. Even so, one worm needs another for mating purposes. How they do it is to snuggle up tightly against each other, heads pointed in opposite directions. Worm A passes sperm to Worm B and vice versa. The sperm is held in surface cavities along with eggs that are released and retained by each animal. A mucus-like substance is emitted from the whitish-looking ring that is prominent on all mature nightcrawlers. (The salacious commonly call this the sex band, but the proper, dignified name is clitellum.) Two worms may maintain the mating position for several hours, during which the mucus secretion surrounds sperm and eggs, then hardens into a bandlike cocoon. Eventually the worms separate. As they individually retreat into their tunnels, the cocoons are shucked off over their heads. If conditions of temperature and moisture are favorable, a baby worm will emerge from the cocoon in a month or so, when soil bacteria break down the casing. However, if the weather is bad the hatching may be delayed for a year or more. The cocoons are waterproof and well insulated.

Though these reproductive arrangements might seem complicated and bizarre, they have worked very successfully for worms. Under any moderately moist, fertile acre of ground in the temperate zone, say in front of the 8th green of a golf course in the Upper Midwest, there will be a million or so nightcrawlers. This is no more than gracious, uncongested suburban-style living from the standpoint of worms. Elsewhere, metropolises of truly impressive densities have been established. Pigpens, for example—or, more

continued

accurately, the ground under them—are for lumbricids what Orange County or Miami Beach might be to us—very desirable pieces of real estate. Under one American pigpen an interested observer found the earthworm count to be 3,388,045 per acre. Given such numbers, a precise census of the world's earthworm population is probably impossible, but within the range of the nightcrawler—northern Europe, parts of Asia, Africa, Oceania and most of North America from central Canada to the latitude of the Mason-Dixon line—there are certainly many, many billions of them.

Individual crawlers are not particularly fertile, nor do they seem preoccupied with sex the way fruit flies are. One worm normally sheds eight or 10 cocoons a year, and from each only a single offspring emerges. However, because they do not worry about, or even know, which is male and which is female, every worm contributes to this reproductive effort and continues to do so for a long time. Fishbaits may live to be 20 years old and keep on making cocoons for most of this time—though not quite all of it. "Earthworms stop breeding sometime before they die," say C. A. Edwards and J. R. Lofty, co-authors of the *Biology of Earthworms*, a standard modern text on the subject. (The more this observation is pondered, the more astute it becomes.)

While nightcrawlers have their problems like everyone else, in many respects they are better able to cope with them than most. They are eminently edible creatures, being soft, stuffed with protein and apparently tasty, according to a scattering of human testimony as well as the responses observed in other species that occasionally get themselves a few mouthfuls. But even though a number of beasts might enjoy feasting on worms, surprisingly few are equipped to do so regularly. Shrews, moles, certain beetles and a few other diggers catch some, though not many in view of the total number of nightcrawlers. We may think of robins and other omnivorous birds as being serious worm feeders, but they only skim the surface, and there are just a few dawn and dusk hours when the light is such that worms care to surface and birds can see them there. (A note to the Great Ecologist: there seems to be a splendid opening for an owl-robin hybrid, a nocturnal worm-eating bird.)

The weather is of far more serious concern to nightcrawlers than predation, and many of their adaptations and activities are aimed at dealing with it. Water, which constitutes about 85% of a worm's body weight, is particularly critical. Worms do not drink as such but absorb moisture through their porous skins. To maintain their vital functions, they must operate in dampish soils where this osmotic action can occur. Being essentially thin membranes enclosing several drops of water, worms literally evaporate if they are stranded in hot, dry places. On the other hand, they can be troubled by too much water, too, because they need oxygen, which is also absorbed through the skin. They can wiggle about, breathing in their fashion, for some time in the well-aerated water of a stream or lake, but will quickly suffocate in dead or stagnant water.

Floods—worm-size floods at least—are frequent and fatal natural calamities for nightcrawlers, as anyone knows who has ever had to sweep off a tennis court covered with their slippery remains or missed a putt because a ball was deflected by corpses sprawled on a green. Most often this sort of mess occurs on a warm day after a rainy evening during which there was enough precipitation to fill worm tunnels with standing, unoxygenated water. So trapped, the nightcrawlers must get out and find high ground or drown. Once forced to abandon their familiar tunnels, they mill about in confusion. Something like trolls, who are reported to turn to stone if caught out in the sunlight, worms are usually doomed if morning finds them wandering around in the open. Many will be scoffed up by birds and other predators. Rising temperatures and drying winds will dehydrate the rest, leaving them like strands of stale spaghetti.



Someone, sometime, must have experienced a eureka-like flash of insight.

Nightcrawlers operate in a fairly narrow temperature range—optimally between 40 and 60 degrees. They run the risk of shriveling at higher temperatures and of freezing at lower ones. Still, extremes of heat and cold are less of a threat than the lack or excess of water, because they are at home in dirt, which is one of the best of all natural insulating materials. Like so many slippery columns of mercury in a thermometer, worms go up and down in their tunnels in response to temperature changes, surfacing on nice cool evenings and descending when the weather is bad for their purposes. During prolonged hot or cold periods, they will retreat to the bottom of burrows that may extend

eight feet or so underground. There they will curl up in balls and wait for more clement conditions. If necessary, they can remain tunnel-bound, quiescent but alive, for four or five months.

The tunnel is to a nightcrawler what the hive is to a bee or a shell to a snail—an absolutely indispensable structure without which life is poor, brutal and short. Perhaps no modern authority is more emphatic on the importance of the burrow than is Ray Edwards, the earthworm guru of Maple Park, Ill. Edwards is the author and publisher of a slim paperback, *The Nightcrawler Manual*, which so far as I am concerned is a modern natural history classic both for instruction and entertainment. A quiet, unpretentious man of 34, Edwards has evolved a unique literary technique that can perhaps be best described as writing at a shout. A passage from *The Nightcrawler Manual* demonstrates this forceful and effective prose style as it drives home some essential points about the home life of fishbaits: "Night*crawlers DON'T live in dirt! They are* TUNNEL DWELLERS. Soil is merely the BUILDING MATERIAL they use to construct the tunnel. The difference between saying 'worms live in dirt' vs. 'nightcrawlers live in a tunnel' may appear slight. Let me assure you it is of the utmost importance that you make the distinction. Tunnels are the KEYS to the survival of crawlers. *Understanding this fact is ONE OF THE KEYS which will lead to your success in working with them.*"

A nightcrawler is continually improving its tunnel, extending it downward—but seldom horizontally—and enlarging the diameter to accommodate increased girth as the worm grows. Considering the importance of this activity, nightcrawlers are not impressively equipped for excavation, lacking hard parts which might serve for scooping, shoveling or prying. They create tunnels by wriggling downward into crevices and moving earth from them by ingesting it. In a day they may swallow an amount equal to their own weight. This burden is then deposited on the surface as excrement, the mounds of castings which dot any wormy field. Properly speaking, worms cannot be said to eat dirt, because, except for minute quantities of nutritional minerals, dirt is taken in not for food but to provide grit for their gizzards. In this organ, just as in those of chickens and other birds, the abrasive matter serves to grind up organic foodstuffs which they collect on the surface.



Attempts are made to popularize worms for human fare.

Being slow, relatively weak burrowers, nightcrawlers cannot quickly construct a new tunnel if something happens to or they are removed from the old ooe. Thus, attempts to increase the worm population of a garden or lawn by throwing out a few handfuls of mature animals are not apt to be successful. Long before most of them can get back underground, they are taken by predators or dehydrated. Successful individuals spend their entire lives in, or at least with part of their bodies in, the same tunnel. Confusion about this situation is common and makes Ray Edwards very IMPATIENT, as he indicates in *The Nightcrawler Manual*. "Crawlers are NOT nomads. They have no way of finding the entrance to their tunnels once they leave. The worms you see CRAWLING have become separated from the only source of protection they know and are fighting a losing battle for survival. Crawling is NOT part of the NORMAL behavior of LIVING nightcrawlers. So why am I making such a 'big deal' about it? When you make an OBSERVATION of an ISOLATED EVENT, derive CAUSE and EFFECT relationships from that 'sighting,' then GENERALIZE your CONCLUSIONS, and APPLY your ASSUMPTIONS to the habits of ALL 'nightcrawlers'—*serious problems arise* which slant your thinking and fog your mind."

Edwards goes on, "It is ironic that an entire species of animals has been named in reflection of the behavior exhibited at the time they are about to die." He suggests that more descriptive names would be "night-stick-their-heads-outers" or "after-dark-comers-near-the-surface," but admits these may be a bit cumbersome for everyday use.

Though they never voluntarily leave their tunnels entirely, nightcrawlers do indeed spend a good bit of time partly extruded from them, and the acts which they perform in this position are vitally important. Mating, for example, occurs on the surface when two neighboring worms meet by leaning out of their tunnels. They surface tail-first to deposit the casting of earth which they have swallowed underground. In feeding, the process and position are reversed. Keeping at least a few tail segments securely wedged in the mouth of a tunnel, a worm stretches out and grabs bits of grass, leaves, twigs and almost any other sort of available organic matter in its mus-

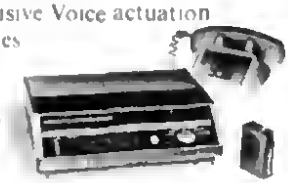
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cular mouth parts. These foodstuffs are dragged underground, where they are either eaten and digested immediately or cached in galleries. For their size, fishbaits are immensely strong. While foraging, one of them can seize and carry back to its tunnel objects that weigh 60 times more than it does. Many of the faint background rustlings and scrapings to be heard on a still summer night in grasslands are the sounds of worms moving huge loads of food across the surface and down into their tunnels.

Thus pursuing their self-interests, earthworms have a critical, continuing and immensely constructive influence on soil quality. Their tunnels loosen and aerate the earth and improve drainage. The organic matter they eat and take underground is composted more rapidly and thoroughly than would be the case if it were left on the surface. In the worm it is mixed with mineral-rich grit the animal has sucked up far underground. This instant humus is returned to and spread around the surface as castings. Each year a normal worm population will produce such topsoil at the rate of 20 to 40 tons per acre. Studies in controlled plots, where the number of worms can be experimentally increased and decreased, have demonstrated that they have a markedly beneficial effect on the growth rate, vigor and productivity of wheat, peas, beans, millet, barley, rye and meadow grass, among other floral species. In some cases the judicious addition of earthworms has doubled crop yields.

It is their function as nature's own Rototillers and fertilizer spreaders that brought earthworms to the admiring attention of Aristotle, Darwin and a good many other authorities. However, important as their ecological role is, worms perform it so quietly and unobtrusively that it commonly goes unnoticed and seems no more remarkable than water flowing downhill. The point where most of us meet and think specifically about worms is at the business end of a fishhook.

Because the natural range of fish and fishbaits does not ordinarily overlap, someone, sometime, must have experienced a eureka-like flash of insight into how very attractive these animals, if properly presented, would prove to bluegills, perch, bass, pike, muskellunge and even (though purists sometimes pretend it is not true) trout. When this important discovery was made, and by whom,

are irretrievably lost in the debris of ancient history, but we do know that fishbaits have been fishbaits for a very long time. All the spaniels and setters, falcons and ferrets taken together probably have not made such a contribution to sport as has *Lumbricus terrestris*. To be sure, lesser members of the worm family are used, too, but the nightcrawler is the preeminent fishbait. A few segments of it can be used as a dainty morsel for small panfish; a full-bodied, vigorous nightcrawler is substantial enough to draw the attention of a bass or muskie. Despite the recent proliferation of rubber, nylon and plastic lures, neither fish nor fisherman has lost the desire for fishbaits. Last year some 600 million nightcrawlers were sold to North American anglers.

All of these worms were captured in the wild, for despite our long association with them, we have never succeeded in completely domesticating nightcrawlers. Given proper food, bedding, humidity and temperature, they can be kept in good condition for many months in a box, but true nightcrawlers will not regularly reproduce when so contained. Removal from their familiar tunnels seems to diminish their sexual appetites. This is not the case with smaller members of the family. Red worms are much less modest and fastidious and will breed willingly in bins, flats, or almost any other sort of a cage. A distant cousin of the President, Hugh Carter of Plains, Ga., who is one of the nation's largest vermiculturists, or worm farmers, selling some 250 million home-grown red worms a year, set up his first hatchery in a coffin. Because of its fecundity, the red worm is the principal product of an industry that now does about $50 million worth of business a year. Most of the red worms are sold to fishermen, but there is a growing market for them among organic gardeners and pet-food manufacturers. In addition, some attempts are being made to popularize red worms for human consumption. At least one earthworm cookbook has been published, and a major vermiculturist has sponsored a recipe contest in which the winning entry was a formula for making earthworm quiche. Worm farming (or, at least, the would-be worm farmer) has also come to the attention of a variety of get-rich-in-your-basement hustlers. Complaints and legal actions against slippery worm promoters have thus far occurred in eight states. "Millions of dollars are being ripped off from the public across the country because of the flimflam in worm-growing arrangements," remarked Harvey Bell, the Commissioner of the Arkansas Securities Division, who has had trouble with hanky-panky artists of this ilk in his state.

Such shenanigans are of no concern to those who deal with true nightcrawlers, because the nature of the animal restricts them to the role of hunters and trappers. Edwards, in his invaluable *Nightcrawler Manual*, deals bluntly and instructively with this matter. "I have repeatedly seen articles about red worms (sometimes called hybrids or wigglers) which are accompanied by photographs of some guy holding up a 10-inch nightcrawler. These methods [employed in red worm culture] CAN NOT be used successfully with nightcrawlers—a fact which they neglect to mention in the story! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RAISE NIGHTCRAWLERS IN YOUR BASEMENT OR GARAGE."

With the help of crews of high school students whom he trains, Edwards himself collects some 500,000 nightcrawlers a year in the vicinity of Maple Park. They are stockpiled in holding pens at bis home and are sold directly from there or from vending machines which he has adapted to dispense worms, and which he has placed at a number of fishing sites in northern Illinois.

Edwards, once a junior high science teacher, is now a full-time fishbait dealer. "I got started," he says, "because I was a bass fisherman and I was cheap. I was too cheap to keep paying out 60¢ for a dozen nightcrawlers, so I started catching my own. Then I got interested in making money and trying to build up a business. I also got interested in the nightcrawlers themselves, watching them, reading about them, trying to figure out their habits. I started out being a fisherman, but now I never seem to have much time to fish. The truth is that on a good night I maybe find it more enjoyable to go out hunting worms and thinking about them than I would if I went fishing."

Having become something of a tycoon and a considerable fishbait naturalist, Edwards spends much of his time selling worms, manufacturing and serving his vermi-vending machines, lecturing to various sporting groups and writing

continued





WORMS

continued

about worms. More and more he depends on his cadre of teen-age associates for the actual collecting, but he remains the grand master. There is probably no other American who has done more to elevate worm hunting to the level of a science, or an art, or a sport. As a great fan of *The Nightcrawler Manual*, I have come to believe that Edwards is to fishbaits what Izaak Walton or Sparse Grey Hackle is to fish. Therefore, I called him and asked if I could follow along sometime when he went worming. Being very generous of his time when it comes to promoting serious interest in fishbaits, Edwards agreed.

We met one warm summer evening at a café some 40 miles west of O'Hare Airport. Instruction began immediately. Edwards allowed that there was no need to rush off because it is foolish to try to stalk the wily *Lumbricus* until it is fully dark, a condition which at this time of year in the Upper Midwest would not occur until almost ten o'clock. Therefore, we sat around drinking coffee, eating a *wretched, prefabricated, frozen Key lime* pie and talking about worms. Edwards was apologetic about the weather, saying it was too dry for really good hunting, he was hoping that there would be enough dew so we could get a little action. He wished I had been able to come several days earlier when a midday shower had created ideal conditions in the evening. "I was out with my crew and we picked 20,000 or so," he said. "We were getting some real ropes." (Exceptionally long, fat animals are ropes, or snakes, in the jargon of worm hunters.) "The next morning when I was packaging them, I dug out a double handful of about the best-looking crawlers I have ever seen. They were like prize tomatoes or squash you'd show at a fair. I took them in to show my wife."

"Did she like them?"

"She said to get those worms out of the kitchen."

Edwards said that we would be hunting on a golf course and was a bit defensive about selecting such a site. This was surprising, because in the days of my youth golf courses were regarded as absolutely the best places to look for worms. Edwards politely explained that my lore, like that of many others of my generation, was obsolete. Because of continued applications of herbicides and pesticides, modern golf courses are often

continued

YOUR CAR AND TOMORROW'S FUELS

AS THE SUPPLY OF OIL DROPS, SYNTHETICS BECOME MORE ATTRACTIVE.

General Motors is not in the fuel business. But since the cars we build depend on fuel, we have to be on top of the energy situation. Here's the way it looks to us.

All the cars we build are powered by internal combustion engines. These engines work by burning petroleum-derived gasoline or diesel fuel under high pressure. So far, petroleum has been the safest, least expensive source of these hydrocarbon fuels, which pack a lot of energy per gallon. But automotive fuels can also be obtained from many other sources, ranging from oil shale to coal and even corn stalks. The problem is to turn these solid materials into safe, convenient, environmentally sound, cost-efficient liquid fuels.

At GM, we have evaluated a variety of domestic resources and alternative fuels.

Fuels made from shale oil are the best current alternatives. Shale oil is produced by heat-treating oil shale, an abundant American resource. Gasoline and diesel fuel could be refined from shale oil. What is needed, however, are the plants to convert the shale rock into the shale oil. As petroleum becomes more expensive, it will be cost-efficient to build these plants. The mining of shale, though, still presents serious environmental problems that must be solved.

Coal is the next best option. Coal can also be turned into gasoline and diesel fuel, but the process is more expensive and complex than that for oil shale. As with oil shale, coal mining also poses environmental problems.

Biomass (vegetation and organic wastes) is another possibility. The main advantage of biomass is that it is a renewable resource. However, biomass is difficult and expensive to collect and process.

The only automotive fuel currently being made that uses biomass is gasohol. Gasohol is a blend of 10% ethyl alcohol and gasoline. The use of gasohol in present-day cars can save gasoline and causes no insurmountable difficulties.

Hydrogen has often been discussed. Although engines can be run on hydrogen, its production potential appears limited, and the practical problems of safe and efficient distribution and storage haven't yet been solved.

Although electricity isn't a fuel, it can be generated from non-petroleum resources. Some electrically-powered cars are already on the road. The problem is that with current lead-acid batteries they're only capable of traveling relatively short distances between battery charges. We're continuing to do extensive research on advanced zinc-nickel oxide storage batteries.

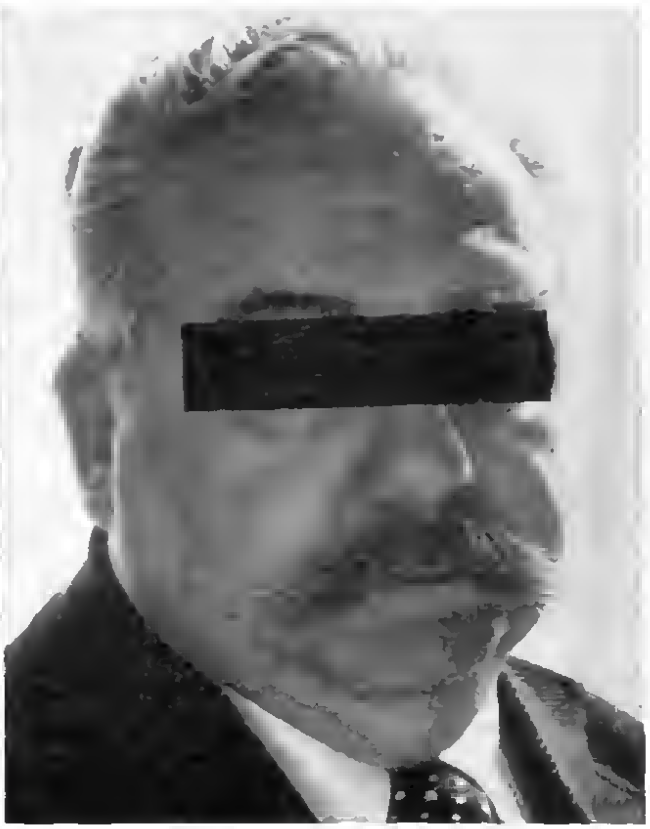
Nothing is more important than ensuring the supply of fuels needed to keep our country strong. At GM we are confident that if government and industry cooperate and work together to explore alternative energy sources, the problem of providing sufficient fuels for the future, at the lowest possible cost, can and will be solved.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

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One of these men had a business that went into a slump, into the red and up in smoke.

He had a fire of a "suspicious" nature, but arson could not be proved. So, he was able to collect a substantial amount on his insurance. He turned his business loss into a profit for himself but into an additional expense for the insurance company and the policyholders.

Arson has become the "hottest" crime in the nation. Who are these arsonists? They range from small, one-time offenders, like the man on the left, to organized professional "torches." Many have found arson a profitable crime. Shocking! Even more shocking are the losses related to arson—700 lives and an estimated $1.6 billion in insured fire losses in 1977. When you consider lost jobs, property taxes and higher costs in consumer goods, the total economic loss is a staggering $10 billion!

We're a major group of property and casualty insurance companies and we're alarmed by the rise in this violent, costly and dangerous crime. Not only does arson jeopardize lives and property, it costs policyholders a lot of money—approximately 40¢ of every claim dollar paid for fire losses. That's four times more than ten years ago.

Recently, the FBI re-classified arson as a major crime, in the same category as murder, rape and grand larceny. This re-classification will result in greater attention by federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. We in the insurance industry urged the government to take this action. We will continue working with law enforcement agencies to stop the spread of this vicious crime.

Here's what we're doing:

- Trying to take the profit out of arson by more extensive investigation of claims and by cooperating in the prosecution of more persons involved in "suspicious" fires.
- Supporting the Insurance Crime Prevention Institute's investigations of insurance fraud.
- Conducting arson-detection seminars for insurance personnel.
- Developing the Property Insurance Loss Register—a computerized file of previous loss claims which will alert investigators.
- Encouraging state legislators to pass stricter laws that carry heavier punishments for arson.
- Encouraging community and state arson task force programs to deal with arson problems on a local level.

Here's what you can do:

- Report any suspicious persons or activity to the police, fire department or fire marshal.
- Support efforts in your community to fight arson.

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worm-poor. "Around here we get our best picking in vacant lots, on school grounds, and around ball fields where they don't use many chemicals." (Ecological aside: investigators have found that earthworms can tolerate relatively large amounts of many commercial pesticides, residues of which are often found in their tissues. Unless the doses are massive, the worms continue to function without immediately apparent ill effects. However, because the toxins tend to be concentrated in their bodies, other less resistant creatures, such as birds, may suffer more from eating contaminated worms than they would from direct exposure to the poison.)

Despite the drawbacks, Edwards had chosen a golf course for demonstration purposes, thinking it would be a more scenic and convenient place to take a rookie than some of the scruffier but more productive areas where he and his commercial crews hunt. "This course isn't the best place, but it's not bad," he said. "I guess it's a little run-down for golf They don't seem to spend a lot of money taking care of it, but that's good for worms. Also, it's a lot easier than crawling around in broken glass, which we have in some of our spots."

We drove to the golf course, and there Edwards began to get into and explain his worm-hunting costume, an outfit he has created as a result of his experiences in the field. The basic uniform is coveralls and kneepads, worn for protection and convenience while crawling around on the ground in the dark. On a belt around his waist he hangs half a dozen plastic boxes—gallon milk containers with the tops cut off. Each of these will hold 500 or so worms. In a similar container he carries a few pounds of sawdust, which serves the same purpose resin does for a baseball batter. "Always keep sawdust on your hands," Edwards said. "If you don't, they [the fishbaits] are going to slip out or you will squeeze too hard trying to get a grip. You get dead worms." (Oak and redwood sawdust should not be used for this purpose, their acid content being harmful to worms.)

Edwards has some strong opinions about footwear, and in *The Nightcrawler Manual* warns: "NEVER WEAR heavy boots. Any heavy, clunky, hard-soled footwear makes too much 'noise' as you walk in the grass." Tennis shoes are good enough for casual amateur hunters, but he himself is more professionally shod What he pulls on is a disreputable-looking pair of old, cracked dress shoes from which the heels and stiff outer soles have been removed. "The inner sole that remains," he writes of his innovation, "will be soft and thin. As you walk slowly and silently at night you will actually 'feel' worms popping under your feet when you step on them."

A critical piece of equipment is the worm light, a battery-powered lamp worn on a headband as miners or cavers do and equipped with a rheostat switch so that the degree of illumination can be adjusted. Bright, clear light alarms crawlers and drives them underground, so Edwards covers his headlamps with white plastic to soften and diffuse the beam. ("Note—I didn't say clear plastic, green plastic, yellow plastic—I said, and meant, white plastic.")

Some authorities have recommended using red headlights, but Edwards believes this is Unnecessary and Unwise. "The worms don't care whether the light is red or white so long as it is soft. The difference is that it is harder for you to see them using a red light. You can't pick what you can't see. The trick is to keep adjusting your white light so you get enough for good picking hut not enough to scare them. It's a little different every night, depending on the sky light."

So prepared, we set off across the 9th fairway, Edwards pussyfooting along in the lead, waiting for worms to pop under his stripped-down shoes. After a few moments he turned down his light and called back that he had found a hot spot. Considering how surreptitiously we had been advancing, he spoke very loudly and clearly. "They don't hear like we do," he explained. "You can talk and even yell and they don't pay any attention. If I'm alone and there's a ball game or something I want to hear, I carry a transistor radio. The thing they are sensitive to is vibrations. Very sensitive. If you walk heavy-footed, you squish the ground. That scares them and they go down."

Trying to squish as little as possible, I joined Edwards at the hot spot A number of nightcrawlers were visihle, eating,

continued



He should have stuffed that worm and hung it over his mantel.

depositing castings, loving or perhaps just taking the night air. We got down on all fours and had at them. For those who may have scooped up a few sick, sluggish animals stranded on a sidewalk, or plucked an occasional one from a lawn, it might seem that hunting nightcrawlers at professional speed would be simple, dull stoop labor on the order of harvesting stringbeans. IT IS NOT. They are slippery, very alert and agile creatures. One false move or vibration and they disappear into their tunnels with the speed of a coiling watch spring. During the course of two or three minutes, Edwards, alternating hands in an easy plucking motion, caught 50 or so worms. In the same period, favoring a lunge-lurch style, I got eight. Two of them were probably squeezed too hard and another had been indisputably Severed in the neighborhood of segment 54. Edwards was kind enough to say that I was not as awkward as some beginners he had seen, and then proceeded to offer advice aimed at improving my technique.

Long experience has enabled Edwards to break down the act of catching a nightcrawler into its step-by-step components, and for instructional purposes he explains them as Ted Williams might describe what to do about the low, inside curveball As in so many other physical activities, the initial stance is of cardinal importance, and Edwards has developed and recommends something he calls the Elephant Walk. To demonstrate, he assumed a crouching position somewhat like that of a down lineman. Spreading his knees apart as far as possible, he crawled ahead while weaving his head and shoulders from side to side in a manner suggestive of a trunkless elephant. As he proceeded, he gleaned worms on both sides, picking with one hand and balancing with the other, then reversing the hand positions. Edwards claims that the Elephant Walk enables the hunter to spread his weight so as to reduce the vibrations he makes and allows him to reach the maximum number of worms with a minimum amount of movement.

Having thus sneaked up on a colony of surfaced worms, one's next movement is the grab, which must be made with controlled speed. Edwards says that in a pre-grab position, the hand should be open, the thumb extended in a hitchhiking gesture. It is then closed around the worm so that some of the head of the beast extends between the thumb and index finger and as much of its body as possible is pressed against the palm. Seizing a fishbait between the fingertips is amateurish and ineffective, because not enough hand-worm contact is provided. As a training aid, Edwards suggests that students boil themselves some rice, line up the grains to simulate a mature fishbait and then practice grabbing until the technique is mastered.

Finally, there is the pull. Steady but gentle vertical pressure should be applied to the grabbed worm. Muscular as they are, a fishbait whose tail is well wedged in its tunnel can resist removal like a tiny mule and can be yanked or jerked apart before releasing its grip. Edwards points out that if a worm has been correctly seized he cannot escape, and a good hunter will patiently maintain tension, just as one might with a hooked fish. In time the worm will tire and can be landed, so to speak. With very strong, stubborn animals, another trick may be used. If the grab has been made properly, the head of the worm should protrude through the fist. The hunter gently squeezes this with his free hand, and often the beast will relax its tail grip on the tunnel wall. Edwards thinks the reason is that pressure on the head parts cons the worm into thinking it is in the safety of its burrow.

Perhaps because of the relatively high temperature, but more likely because I was a noisy elephant crawler, a clumsy grabber and erratic puller, the hot spot we were working petered out shortly, the nightcrawlers retreating underground. However, because this was essentially a sporting and educational outing, Edwards was not especially concerned and used the situation to demonstrate another bit of worm craft. Reaching into his collecting box, he took out a nice handful of fishbaits and scattered them about the ground as if broadcasting grass seed. "We can pick these guys up anytime," he explained, "but until we do, they are going to crawl around like crazy. They are desperate because they aren't in their tunnels. The ones below are going to *hear* them, as we would say, but actually they are going to feel them banging around on top. Now what are they going to think? They are going to think there is no danger, because these guys are moving on the surface. The ones below are going to think the ones on top are having a good time, probably feeding or mating. So they are going to want to come up and get into the action themselves. This is just like fishing or any kind of hunting. You have to try to put yourself in the position of whatever it is you are after."

In this case the ploy worked very well. Within 10 minutes or so, more worms than were originally in the spot began poking their snouts out of the ground. When a worthwhile number emerged, they, as well as the decoy animals, were grabbed and pulled.

"A lot of beginners make the mistake of thinking that once they have picked a few minutes in a hot spot they have to find another, because the worms have been scared away," said Edwards. "They don't understand how worms live. A nightcrawler can't run away. It has to stay in a tunnel, and there is only one opening on the surface. If you see it once, you will find him there again in exactly the same spot. Sometimes when I first start picking in a spot, I'll see a real rope just out of reach. It's just like hunting. There is a challenge to get that big one. I'll mark the spot where I saw it go down with a little sawdust and come back later that night or even another night and get it."

"What's the biggest one you ever caught?"

"It was a couple of years ago. I saw this really unbelievable worm, the snake of all snakes, and you can bet I hung around until I pulled him. He was as long as my lower arm from the elbow to fingertip and about as big around as my thumb."

"What did you do with him? There is no way you could stuff him in a vending machine."

"I decided since it was the biggest worm I'd ever seen, I was going to try with him for the biggest fish I'd ever catch. There is a lake 10 miles or so away that not many people know about, and it has some lunker bass. I took that rope out there, strung him up and put him in the water."

"What happened?"

"I caught a six-pound carp. What a disappointment."

"You should have stuffed that worm and hung it over your mantel."

"I thought about that afterward." END



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FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the week August 13-19
Compiled by BILL COLSON

BOATING—In the most tragic race in yachting history, CONDOR OF BERMUDA, skippered by Bob Bell of Bermuda, set a course record for the Fastnet leg of the Admiral's Cup. The 77-foot sloop finished in 71 25 23, nearly eight hours faster than the old mark. TENACIOUS, with Ted Turner of Atlanta at the helm, won on corrected time in 79:52:22. Fifteen sailors died and 23 of the 306 boats in the race either sank or were abandoned when heavy rains, 75-knot winds and 40-foot waves battered the southwest coast of England *(page 16)*

BOWLING—WAYNE WEBB defeated Steve Westberg 237–199 to win the $75,000 Greater Buffalo Open.

BOXING—MATTHEW SAAD MUHAMMAD retained his WBC light heavyweight title with a unanimous decision over John Conteh in Atlantic City *(page 24)*

DIVING—GREG LOUGANIS of Mission Viejo, Calif. became the first diver to 15 years to sweep the one- and three-meter springboard and the 10-meter platform events at the AAU Outdoor Championships, in Decatur, Ala. In the women's competition, KELLY McCORMICK and KIT SALNESS, both of Mission Viejo, won the one- and 10-meter events, respectively, and MICHELE HAIN of Dallas triumphed in the three-meter.

GOLF—JERRY McGEE shot a final-round 65 for a 17-under-par 267 to win the rain-delayed $300,000 Greater Hartford Open by one stroke over Jack Renner.

Firing a three-under-par 70 on the final day for a 288, JUDY RANKIN successfully defended her title in a rain-delayed $100,000 PGA tournament at Jericho, N.Y. Beth Daniel was second, two strokes back.

CAROLYN HILL of Placentia, Calif. defeated Patty Sheehen of Reno, Nev. 7 and 6 to win the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship in Memphis.

A birdie on the final hole gave JACK RENNER a seven-under-par 277 and a one-stroke victory worth $72,000 in the $400,000 Westchester Classic in Harrison, N.Y., his first triumph on the PGA Tour. Howard Twitty and David Graham tied for second.

HORSE RACING—GENERAL ASSEMBLY ($8.80), Jacinto Vasquez up, won the $134,750 Travers Stakes at Saratoga by 15 lengths over Smarten. The 3-year-old son of Secretariat covered the sloppy 1¼-mile course in a track-record 2:00 *(page 45)*

POCKET BILLIARDS—MIKE SIGEL of Towson, Md., beat Joe Balsis of Minersville, Pa. 150–31 to win the World Open title in New York City.

SOCCER—NASL. Paced by Forward Hugo Sanchez, who scored twice in each game, San Diego swept California out of the playoffs. Also advancing to the semifinal round in the American Conference were Tampa Bay and Chicago. The Rowdies took two straight from Detroit, and the Sting did the same to the Strikers, shutting them out both times. Chicago Goalie Tony Chursky has now gone more than four games without allowing a goal. In the conference's only surprise, Philadelphia, which had the fewest points of any playoff team, upset regular-season champion Houston 2–1 to take a 1–0 lead in their series. New York and Vancouver moved into the National Conference semis by sweeping Toronto and Dallas, respectively. They were joined by Los Angeles, which did not clinch its spot until 97 of 97 of its second game against Washington. Johan Cruyff scored the deciding goal in the 4–3 overtime victory. David Nish's goal at 94:06 lifted Tulsa to a 2–1 overtime defeat of Minnesota and eliminated the Kicks from the playoffs.

ASL. The New York Eagles won two of three to take over first place in the Eastern Division from idle Columbus. Third-place Pennsylvania virtually assured itself of the division's final playoff berth with a 1–0 win over Indianapolis and a 3–1 defeat of the New York Apollo. In the West, Los Angeles closed to within three points of Sacramento in the race for second place in the division and the home-field advantage in the first playoff round. The Skyhawks beat Las Vegas twice, while Sacramento split a pair of games with California, which has already clinched the division title. Sacramento won the second game 3–0, with Anselmo Victoso booting in all the Golds' goals.

SWIMMING—MARY T. MEAGHER, 14, of Louisville, Ky. twice broke her own world record in the women's 200-meter butterfly at the National AAU Championships in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Her time of 2:07.01 in the finals was 2.76 seconds better than the mark she set at last month's Pan-Am Games and 1.40 faster than the record she had set in a heat nine hours earlier. On the final day of the meet KIM LINEHAN of Sarasota, Fla. broke the world record in the women's 1,500-meter freestyle with a time of 16:04.49, 2.14 seconds faster than the mark Australia's Tracey Wickham set earlier this year. The FLORIDA AQUATIC TEAM defeated the Mission Viejo (Calif.) Nadadores 827–713 for the overall team title.

TENNIS—JIMMY CONNORS beat Mike Cahill 6–0, 6–1 to win a $75,000 Grand Prix tournament in Stowe, Vt.

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA defeated Kathy Jordan 6–1, 6–3 to win a $75,000 tournament in Richmond.

TRACK & FIELD—SEBASTIAN COE of England, who had broken the world 800-meter and mile records within 12 days in July, added the world record in the 1,500. His time of 3:32.1 at Zurich was 1 second faster than the record Filbert Bayi set in 1974.

VOLLEYBALL—IVA. The playoffs began with Santa Barbara defeating Seattle three games to two in the opening match of the Western Conference finals. The turning point came during the tight fourth game when Ed Skorek, Seattle's best hitter-blocker, went down with a sprained ankle. Fortunately for Tuscon, all of its front-line men made it through the first match of the Continental Division finals. The Sky escaped with an 11–9 tie-breaker victory over Denver despite having only one reserve, an inexperienced female defensive specialist.

MILEPOSTS—AWARDED By a Houston federal jury to Houston Rocket Forward RUDY TOMJANOVICH $3.3 million in damages for injuries he suffered when Los Angeles Laker Forward Kermit Washington punched him in the face during a game in Los Angeles on Dec. 9, 1977. The amount, for which the then-owner of the Lakers, California Sports, Inc., is liable was $600,000 more than Tomjanovich had asked for. His injuries, which included a fractured nose, jaw and skull, a concussion and leakage of spinal fluid from the brain cavity, caused Tomjanovich to miss 58 games.

TRADED By the New England Patriots, two-time All-Pro Tackle LEON GRAY, 27, to Houston for the Oilers' first- and third-round draft choices in 1980.

CREDITS

10,11—John Iacono. 12—Carl Iwasaki (top), AP (inset), John Iacono. 14—Heinz Kluetmeier (top), AP (inset), John Iacono, AP (inset). 15—Steve Hansen (top), Milwaukee Journal (inset), Heinz Kluetmeier, AP (inset). 16,17—Greg Shires. 18—Louis Kruk (top), Greg Shires. 19—map by Dan Todd. 20—Ken Goff. 23—Louis Kruk (top), Greg Shires. 24—James Drake. 25—Eric Schweikardt. 26—James Drake. 27—Dan Bellotti (top), George Tiedemann. 30,31—Co Rentmeester. 32—Evelyn Floret. 38—Richard Mackson. 46—Jerry Cooke. 49—Paramount Pictures. 67—Bill Stozle (2), James Threscher, Washington Post, Bill Holder.

FACES IN THE CROWD

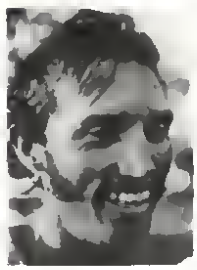




BETSY OELENITIS
KEARNY, N.J.

NELL TAYLOR
NEW HAVEN, CONN.

Oelenitis, a junior at Tufts, and Taylor, who graduated from Yale this spring, were the titlists in the U.S. Women's Singlehanded and Doublehanded Sailing Championships in Rochester, N.Y. Sailing a 14-foot Laser, Oelenitis won the singlehanded division with two victories, one third-place finish and one sixth. Sailing a 14-foot 420 with Charlotte Lewis of Beverly, Mass. as crew, Taylor, the only female 1979 sailing All-America, won the doublehanded division with two firsts and a third.



DEMITRIOS CABANILLAS
LAMAZTLA, MEXICO

Cabanillas, a 24-year-old Brigham Young senior, won his fourth consecutive *Deseret News* Marathon. He defeated more than 1,300 runners in a race-record 2:19:35.49, second faster than the mark set in 1974.



CATHY HEARN
GARRETT PARK, MD.

Hearn, 21, became the first American woman to win three gold medals in the World Whitewater Kayak Championships, in Jonquiere, Quebec. She won the women's individual slalom and led the U.S. to team-slalom and wildwater victories.



JOE DISTASI
MIAMI

DiStasi, a 33-year-old Miami policeman, became the 13th player in the 78-year history of the American Bowling Congress to bowl back-to-back 300 games, performing the feat in a non-league tournament at Miami's Tropical Lanes.



DUANE MARTIN
TROTWOOD, OHIO

Duane set a national record for 10-year-olds in both the 220 dash and the 440 run. His time of 25.2 in the 220 in Memphis was 1.5 seconds faster than the old mark. The 440 he ran in 58.7 in Towson, Md. beat the previous best by 1.1 seconds.

19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

Edited by GAY FLOOD

MOMENTS AND MEMORIES

Sir:

Thanks so much for your Silver Anniversary Issue (Aug. 13) and the remembrance of things past. As the daughter of a charter subscriber—I think the first issue is still in the top drawer of the china cabinet back home—I fondly recall the glory of those early issues of SI. They may have been "exotic" and patrician, but they were *good*. The full-color photos of America's Cup races and Kentucky Derbies seemed awesome to a fifth-grader in a small city in western Pennsylvania.

JOAN E. BEHRENS
Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif.

Sir:

Twenty-five years ago as a 17-year-old boy I scraped together the funds for my first subscription to a magazine. It was SI, and I feel I've grown up with you. Like the 25th Anniversary Issue, I'm now quite a bit thicker, but a lot better off. Thanks for the past 25.

JERRY ANDERSON
Georgetown, S.C.

Sir:

Selection of the title SPORTS ILLUSTRATED was appropriate. Your color action photography is without equal. I have collected nearly every color page you have published.

PAUL A. WISNER
Huntsville, Ala.

Sir:

Your Silver Anniversary Issue brought back some wonderful memories. I am a charter subscriber, and I still have the first three issues of your magazine and couldn't help but thumb through them again after reading the current one. You mentioned in your LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER (Aug. 13) how many of the original staff are *still* with you (nine), but you didn't say how many of the original subscribers are with you now. I bet there are a lot of us around.

HARVEY HALPIN
Alameda, Calif.

• Indeed, many of our charter subscribers are still with us—there are about 34,000 that we know of—and we delight in hearing from them from time to time. And speaking of our original staffers, we should mention that in addition to the nine listed, three others, all currently working on our Copy Desk, also helped put out Vol. I, No. 1. Barbara Murray and Bob Williams were proofreaders of that first issue, and Catherine Ogilvie was a copy girl.—ED

Sir:

I thoroughly enjoyed your Silver Anniversary Issue, but it reminded me of a very large problem here in Chicago. In the article *Down Glory Road* not one championship Chicago team was mentioned. Why? Probably because Chicago has not had a championship team for a long, long time. Well, maybe the Cubs can pull off some kind of miracle this year. Maybe.

DAVE COX
Midlothian, Ill.

Sir:

If, some 2,000 years from now, an archeologist opens up a time capsule and finds only a copy of your Silver Anniversary Issue, he or she will doubtless be convinced there was no sport called harness racing between the years 1954 and 1979. The thoroughbreds deserve the attention you gave them, but is it conceivable that a bicycle racer and an Alpine skier had a greater impact on the nation than, say, Bret Hanover, a pacing horse who won 62 of 68 career races, set nine speed records, was named Harness Horse of the Year three times and was the reason for attendance marks that still stand 15 years later?

DONALD P. EVANS
Vice-President, Public Relations
The U.S. Trotting Association
Columbus, Ohio

Sir:

Bill Walton has appeared on your cover 13 times and yet the one man who has absolutely dominated his sport during virtually the entire 25-year history of SI has never made it. Bill Muncey has won more than twice as many unlimited hydroplane races as his nearest competitor. He was winning the big ones in the '50s, and he is still winning in 1979—witness his most recent victory, the Seattle Seafair Trophy race on Aug. 5.

BILL CLARK
San Francisco

Sir:

You omitted Jim Bunning's perfect game in 1964!

RICHARD J. MONASTRA
Philadelphia

Sir:

I don't know what it takes to get you to realize that bowling is a sport.

KEVIN J. SCHOLL
Freeburg, Pa.

BANNISTER'S VIEW

Sir:

Sir Roger Bannister is a remarkable human being—a late-20th-century Renaissance man. His forceful, insightful essay, *Beyond the Barrier*, in the Aug. 13 issue covered the two most important dimensions of sport: the special world of the elite athlete, *i.e.*, the Olympian, and the multifaceted world of "sport-for-all." Bannister's essential message is that mankind is the better for having enlarged both these dimensions.

Dr. Bannister will be in the U.S. Feb. 8-10 for an Olympic Games symposium at Skidmore College. The meetings will be open to the public. As a sport historian, I look forward to sharing the speaker's platform with Sir Roger, a uniquely cosmopolitan man.

JOHN LUCAS
Professor of Physical Education
Penn State University
State College, Pa.

Sir:

Roger Bannister's mile! It made a welcome wave and washed the world with hope. I felt it then and for years afterward.

And I felt, too, something of Bob Beamon's awe when, on television, I saw him cover his face with his hands after his prodigious leap.

Now, after reading Sir Roger's lofty footnote in your Silver Anniversary Issue about Beamon's jump being "altitude assisted," I wonder: How does Sir Roger take his record—with one asterisk (pacesetter Chris Chataway), or two (pacesetter Chris Brasher)?

FRED PEARCE
Aspen, Colo.

UNCLE ARBRIA'S PHILOSOPHY

Sir:

About halfway through *The Peach Brandy Man* (Aug. 13), I asked myself: What's this doing in a sports magazine? By the time I had finished the article, I could only say thank you, thank you.

A real sportsman will always have time to entertain the Uncle Arbrias of this world. Yes, Don Sutton is a fine man. And Phillip Timothy Gay is a fine writer.

GARY BLEVINS
Forth Worth

Sir:

The Peach Brandy Man was one of the most heartwarming and interesting stories I have ever read. Arbria Johnson's philosophy concerning man's relationship to his fellowman is very similar to my own: if you like a person, "it don't matter 'bout color, never has."

ROBBYE W. TUCKER
Melbourne, Fla.

Sir:

Phillip Gay's article was a wonderful story about a wonderful man.

JAMIE HINMAN
Pittsburgh

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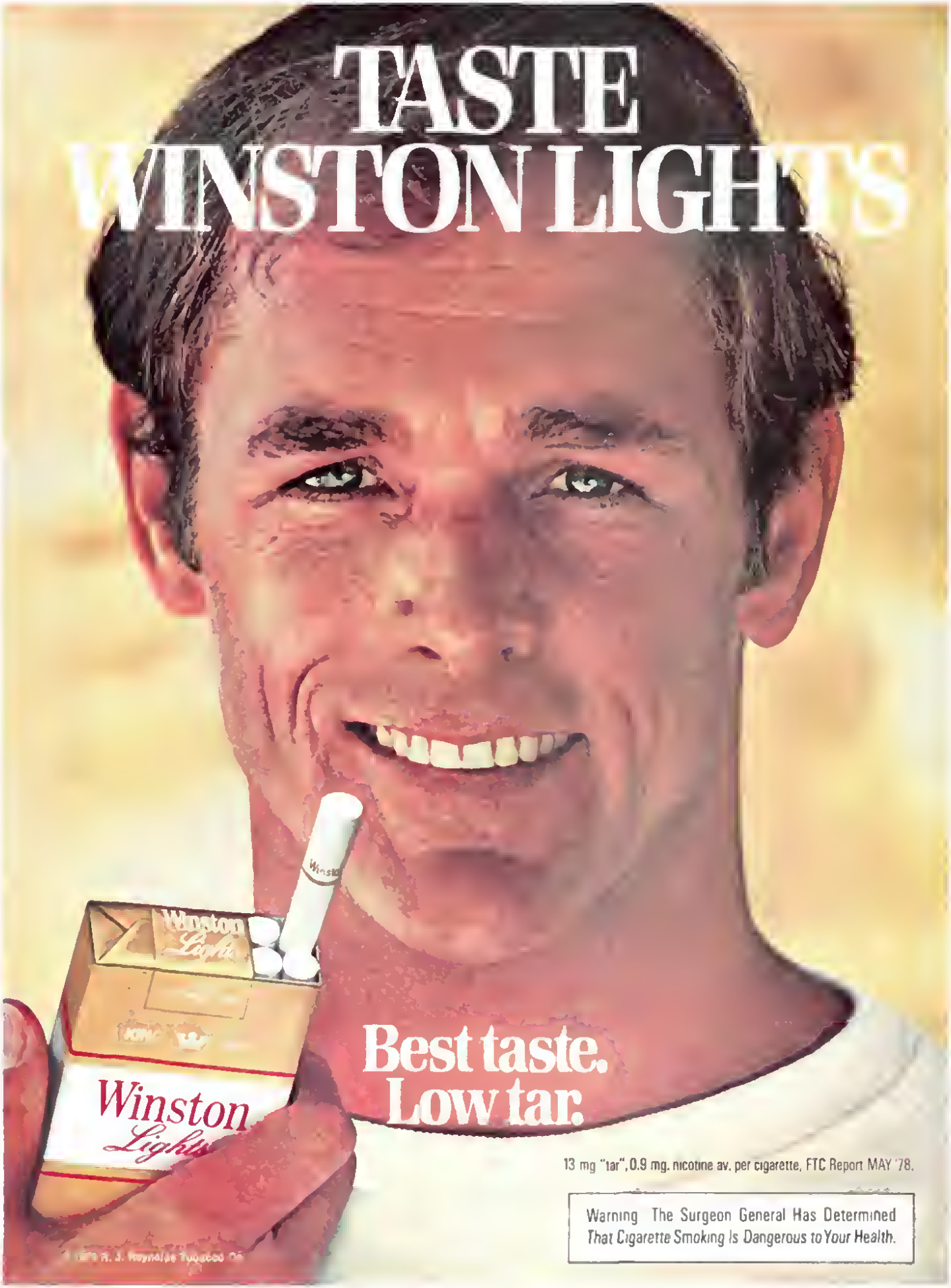
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